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Short Stories

Poems

BY G. A. ALDRICH

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Compliments of the author. Shall be pleased to have you review my "Epic of the South West", page 123

The Author.

THE AUTHOR

WEATHERTON

PACIFIC ISLANDS

AND

OTHER STORIES

SONNETS

BY G. A. ALDRICH

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

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1912

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Dear reader, we beg you cherish the contents of these pages purely as a plea for the welfare of all things affinitive with an ever romantically possible business—world. Trusting, from our hearts, fair perusal of our work here, may develop naught offensive to the veriest delicate business susceptibility, we respectfully subscribe ourself

THE AUTHOR.

FIRST EDITION

1912

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WEATHERTON, PACIFIC ISLANDS

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WEATHERTON, PACIFIC ISLANDS

WE were called upon to make a moral and intellectual analysis of one, Weatherton. We (myself and Muse) had been traveling extensively in the Tropics, particularly in that portion popularly styled South Pacific. Just who my Muse may have been is not really in order here. Let it suffice she went commonly by my *nom de plume;* and manifested herself chiefly through the quality, and generosity, of my eager pen and parchment. Weatherton had found his way aboard our very comfortable ship at Tahiti; and rather East of what he eventually described as his wonted haunts.

He was not a tourist; or a trader. Neither was he a shipping-merchant. Lastly, he claimed no affinity with the military, or official, world. There may have been somewhat of the *incroyable* about him; and so our investigation finally established.

Dress counts for naught in this part of the world. Publican and patrician, alike, don the snow-white jacketed duck topped with apology-for-Panama hats. The quality of the individual is betrayed in the eye; in the pose; the speech (somewhat qualifiedly); the purse and social-bearing.

First glance failed to establish our latest addition to the passenger-list as other than patrician. There was no doubt he had at some time, too, been a student; and was now a scholar. There were certain signs of wealth, likewise proof-positive of its possessor's worth. There was an affectation of *insouciance* that determined him a finished man of

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a well-studied world, without the smallest shadow of a doubt. Weatherton was a gentleman. Note No. 1. It would seem as though qualitative analysis might need go no further. But it was destined to; and it did.

Weatherton had other, shall we say, characteristics. He was a romancer—no, he denied it; and that vigorously. In the name of all physical, all profitably physical, he was truthful to the verge of dull matter-of-fact. He dealt purely in the physical. There was essentially nothing psychic about this anomalous person. He was soulless. Was it a case of lost-soul? He denied this also. He didn't believe in such a thing. Surely lost-soul must result of imperfect creation; and should be, therefore, positively impossible. Weatherton was impious. No, this he denied. Merely matter-of-fact. Such theories as even the commonplace lost-soul idea were but vacuous platitude founded upon the intoxication of ages. The world must sober down, some time in the near future; and refute it all strenuously. Let us have fact, sordid fact, if you like; but fact cosmic, indissoluble. Let us have, in the present instance, geographical fact to begin with.

We were reminded, forthwith, that our new acquaintance had been resident for many years in the Pacific Islands. This he gave us, gravely, to understand, by way of prologue to the piece behind the curtain. Having been resident in this most interesting part of the world, he claimed himself justly possessed of many likewise interesting (certainly novel) details of experience.

"I have just buried my wife twice," he vouchsafed. "Sweet creature," he added sadly.

"Must have been," butted in someone at his elbow.

"Laugh, gentlemen, laugh, if you choose. But, believe me, I have but just twice buried a loving wife; over whose remains two costly services for the repose of the soul have been duly performed; and two commodious graves piously digged."

"My dear sir," interposed an apparently concerned, though otherwise disinterested personage, who formed one of an assembly of half a dozen about our odd newcomer.

"I feel it incumbent upon me to warn you against potent drink in equatorial latitudes. One, distinctively one, glass of cognac would have satisfied your immediate cravings had you been justly wise. Never, sir, never take two glasses of liquor, south of 23°-30′ N., as you value your health. Why, sir, you talk double. No doubt you have seen double. I marvel you do not triangulate your concourse; and lead us into phases of thought criminally subservient to all on earth acceptable. Please try again. Conclusively, you are, now, more sober."

"I must request you to place implicit faith in all I am about to relate," continued Mr. Weatherton. "If you were to visit my chosen home, you might readily find two skillfully dug graves in substantiation of what I have painfully described to you. There were two burials of my wife; *both on the same day, at precisely the same hour and minute of the day;* and I possessed but one wife."

"Good Christian," ventured someone, "but very certain of burial. Do you never *inter* down your way?"

"Distinctively burial, sir, in every instance. A thing, too, twice done, is, I assure you, well done."

"Perhaps you espoused that wife of yours twice?" again ventured someone.

"Quite right," responded the stranger. "And married her twice *at the same minute of the same hour of the same day.* Odd, too, we had two separate ministers to perform the service; each in his own particular parish. Indeed, sirs, I assure you further, my only child, a bouncing lad of thirteen summers, was likewise christened twice *on the same day at the same moment.* Only a fortnight ago he celebrated two birthdays, *both on the same day; and, likewise, moment.*"

"Gentlemen, bets!" called somebody.

"Bets? No!" exploded the sarcastic gentleman of the drink theory. "It is ill-advised betting, gentlemen, such as you propose. Never wager good gold against a lunatic's testimony. You will concede me right, I hope. This person's mind is evidently deranged. Are you going to trifle with self-respect by betting over his romantic self-assurance?"

"I am perfectly rational, gentlemen, I assure you," butted in Weatherton. "Take me to the ship's physician; and let him be judge of my condition. First, however, let me suggest you cast from you all contumely, not to say bias; lest you, by some mistaken sign, convey your permature convictions to the doctor's mind; and command his

judgment at the cruel expense of my personal freedom. Such things are, frequently, soulfully regretted afterwards. To deprive a man of his mental character is to confine him, like a dog, subject to the whims and foibles of a dastardly lower condition of certain of the earth's powers. For mercy's sake, be just, I implore you!"

"Our newcomer's plea seems reasonable, gentlemen," followed up the sarcastic man. "But don't let us permit of such lunacy in our presence."

"I am for handcuffing him; and confinement in the brig," interposed someone, evidently from that corner of the world (if there be any such in particular) which knows no mercy.

"Nay, nay," slipped in a Scotchman. "Hoot mon! Richt is richt; and dinna you do muckle wrang to a mon an' you ken he's on'y a mon for a' that. Let him hae a trial, and the Lord hae mercy on his soul."

"Well said, Scotland," shouted two or three. Establish an *inquirendo,* and determine his sanity."

We were crossing the equator. The weather was exactly such as it ought to have been, windless and hot. There were clouds in the azure vault above; but they betokened rain abundant and warm; not change of temperature. Romantic to view, this non-descript massing of moist-laden vapor prosaic science has gravely dignified with title, *to wit*: Nimbus, Cumulus, etc.; but added nothing to in beauty. Romantic to view, we repeat; for, to the imaginative eye, their varied

shapes embodied all of the grotesque savagery necessary to the building up of primitive South Pacific history. Here were features horrid, rough of profile, truly representative of some cannibalistic hula-dancing swarthy chief who ruled and swayed the miniature continents beneath. Here were mountains and valleys; forests and grassy slopes.

The sea rolled peacefully its fathomless cobaltine blue; and myriads of active little flying fish, apparently not appreciative of the beauties of their wondrous salty domain, sought to brave the impossible atmosphere for a brief moment; but to return whence they came, with vicious splash and splutter. An occasional whale spouted its disapproval, too. A marvelously beautiful ocean; all fire at night and heavenly color by day, this expansive Pacific. Some contemporary writer has told of men having fathomed the equatorial depths to find a race of human beings. Not impossible, we venture; for is not man and the beautiful in nature truly affinitive? The sheer splendor of these depths should warrant their habitation.

But we shall not attempt the marvelous just here. That would be to outrival our friend Weatherton. In the depths of his blue eyes, and interesting soul, we are now to penetrate. Regretfully let us put aside the wondrous skies and limitless expanse of seas.

Several deck-chairs were at once pushed into circle, the usual deck-crew having been brought into expensive requisition. I believe the actual cost of this portion of the procedure footed up

to thirty-five cents. The main-hatch, covered with new white canvas, as it was, constituted an excellent working table for judge and clerk alike; and two commodious cane-bottomed arm-chairs were commandeered from the stores to play the part of thrones for examining physicians. Much blank literature and crusted ink was evident, too; as also an abundance of lead pencils.

A committee of three, elected by popular acclaim, had set about appointing proper officials. It wanted but to call the Court to order; and one, Frank X. Weatherton (his given name was Francis Xerxes), was to stand before his betters, on the last stretch of a fighting-chance for liberty and life.

"Order!" called forth the Court, while rapping the hatch vigorously with an iron belaying-pin. "I wish to remind the Court, that, pertinent with the character of our gavel, I have been likewise appointed bailiff of this dignified assemblage; and, judging from my very present mood and inclination, am eager for any chance fray that may come about, resultant upon the impropriety of my listeners. You cannot fail to observe this belaying-pin! The next case, Mr. Clerk."

"One, Weatherton, charged with insanity, come into court," shouted the official who presided over the pen-and-ink department.

"Adsum," responded the defendant.

"Take the stand, Mr. Weatherton," began counsel. The committee, it will be agreeable to add, had exercised sufficient Christian forethought to afford counsel for the defendant. Such elabo-

ration has been commonly deemed extravagant superfluity.

"Mr. Weatherton," resumed the Clerk, "you are charged with insanity. What is your full name?"

"I have two full names. Shall I give them both?" queried the defendant.

"Absurd, sir," interposed the Court.

"Not at all. I was christened *twice on the same day at the same moment,*" replied the monstrosity.

"Humph! Mr. Clerk, we shall have to establish inquirendo. It had better be done at once; and without further distressing this unfortunate man's mental self. Call the physicians in."

"They are present, your Honor."

"Then let them have the prisoner. The Court will adjourn to the smoking room, where it is informed an important hearing entitled Weed vs. Hops awaits it. This case is continued to 11:15 a. m."

The learned physicians in attendance now drew their chairs about the much crestfallen prisoner; and plied him with questions. There resulted several minutes of animated jabble; followed by much expression of doubt, poignantly in evidence through excited gesture of the examining board; and likewise manifest in their wry looks. No conclusion, apparently, could be gotten at. Ten minutes, twelve had passed; and the little group of very red-faced bluster arose in response to a returning Court. 11:15 a. m.

"Order!" called the Judge; and again cracked

the hatch a blow with the belaying-pin, which threatened to vent it at the expense of much wholesome condition on deck.

"Call the defendant, Weatherton, to the stand," added the Court.

"Your Honor," interposed counsel for the defense, "we object on the grounds that defendant has but recently been in the hands of professional men proverbially given up to vicious contumely. We feel certain prisoner's nerve-self must have suffered severely from the trial it has been put to."

"Were no liquors, beer or other stimulants provided during the inquirendo?" feelingly inquired the Court.

"None, your Honor."

"Not even cigars?" again ventured the Court.

"Not even tobacco," gravely responded counsel.

"The Court is, here, pertinently, I think, instructed that this seeming departure from its wonted dignity chances to be entirely consonant with circumstances. The adjourned procedure, just held in the smoking-room, that in which Messrs. Weed and Hops (exceedingly worthy gentlemen of trade) figured so prominently, has quite possessed our soul and understanding. We cannot, however, sustain the objection. Let the case proceed."

"Mr. Weatherton, kindly take the stand," began counsel.

"Mr. Weatherton," he continued, "what is your present name? By what name does, or did, your wife address you? What signature do you place to your notes? Mind, just one name——"

"What the Court desires, prisoner, is your conscience in the matter of names. Surely you have one, a single name, somewhere about you. Thus far we have not determined you a man of irredeemably duplicate character. What name do you thrust your nose into, when crossing the street to luncheon? How do you begin and end your prayers——"

"We must beg your Honor desist."

"On what grounds, counsel?"

"Departure from precedent, your Honor."

"No; in matters lunatic, the Court may effect limitless bounds of thought and judgment. For instance, I desire to test the humor of this case. Prisoner, what is your idea of perjury? Just how do you define perjury?"

"Why, your Honor, if a person, having taken an oath, tells a falsehood on the stand, he commits perjury." Replied the unfortunate Weatherton.

"Not at all," followed up the Court, somewhat eagerly. "If the true ends of justice are obtained, falsehood or not, no perjury stands in evidence. The ends justify the means. If, however, witness' false testimony so perturbs the Court as to defy all technique of order, puts the machine out of order, thus ruffling the bench's wonted humor, it is very apt to be perjury. I merely broach this interesting point, I repeat, to test the humor of the case. Proceed, Mr. Clerk."

"Mr. Weatherton, you have been requested to give your name. Please respond."

"Francis Xerxes and Henry Darius Weatherton, thank you," replied the suspect.

"Accept the first given name for all present purposes, Mr. Clerk. Let the case proceed."

"Mr. Francis X. Weatherton, what is your age?"

"Forty-seven."

"Of what nationality are you?"

"Polynesian, of American parents."

"Are you married?"

"A widower."

"How many children have you?"

"One. A son."

"What is your son's name?"

"We object, your Honor. This is irrelevant. What has this man's son to do with his sanity?"

"Your Honor, I beg you will not sustain the objection," butted in counsel for the prosecution. "It is our intention to introduce this son in intervention, on the grounds that he is to be his father's heir. The Court will, no doubt, at once recognize the coherence of my argument."

"Perfectly absurd; perfectly absurd. We have undertaken to establish this prisoner's, ahem, lunacy. If he be lunatic, he must perforce die intestate. In which case, I cannot comprehend the son's object in intervention," decided the Court.

"We sustain the objection," continued the Court.

"Mr. Weatherton, what is your occupation?" plied the Clerk.

"Planter."

"And where did you say you resided?"

"I haven't said. On the Island of ———."

"Weatherton," requested counsel, "what is your faith? Of what religious persuasion are you?"

"Christian," replied defendant.

"Have you ever before been suspected of insanity?"

"No. Ridiculous I should now so be! I have always been sane. How have I created impression to the contrary, pray?"

"You have told the Court you were christened *twice on the same day and at the same minute of the same hour.* Do you still insist?"

"I told the plain truth. Were I to enlarge upon the matter, I ———"

"Enough, enough. Call the physicians," interrupted the Court.

"Dr. Jones," put in counsel for the prosecution, "please take the stand."

"There will be no need of swearing in Dr. Jones," volunteered the Court. "He is a licensed practitioner. Let the matter proceed."

"Dr. Jones, you and your fellow practitioner, Dr. Smith, have just examined the defendant, Weatherton, with a view to determining his mental condition. What were your conclusions?"

"Mad, mad. The most vicious case of monomania resultant upon cerebro-spinal complications I have ever met with; and, I desire to add, I have practiced as alien in such matters for over a score of years. This man Weatherton is mad! His every idea is delusion. I feel assured he has lived the impossible life of the paranoiac; and an originally neurasthenic condition of an illy-created

physique has been hopelessly ruined, and lost to redemption, through the evil workings of an unbalanced mind. Were I called to prescribe, I should iron him to the floor of a well-padded cell, and starve him by inches on stale bread, and carefully calibrated glasses of water."

"You need not proceed further, Doctor. Call Dr. Smith."

"Dr. Smith, take the stand."

"Doctor, what is your professional opinion regarding defendant's mental condition?"

"Weatherton, I believe such is his name, is suffering from acute hypochondriasis, resultant upon an extremely ill condition of the glandular system. He may or may not be insane at the present time. I cannot vouch for his mental condition, I repeat, at the present moment. I feel assured, however, that his testimony respecting his double christening———"

"We object, your Honor," interposed counsel. It is not witness' duty to pass opinions upon evidence before the Court. Neither is it his privilege. He is called upon as expert *in re* sanity of defendant."

"Objection sustained," conceded the Court.

"Dr. Smith, proceed, please, accordingly."

"Severe cases of hypochondriasis, like hypochondria, are frequently lunatic. Many famous characters in the world's history have been confined resultant upon the acquirement of this strange disease. It is, I take it, located in remote parts of the glandular system which can only be operated upon with great jeopardy to life. I

give it my honest opinion, and I am giving no other, defendant has a lunatic's make-up; and may have been insane."

"That will do, Doctor," now suggested the Court. "Counsel for the defense will take the case in hand."

"Your Honor, I prefer my confrere, counsel for the prosecution, should venture the next remark."

"Very well," replied that modest gentleman. "I wish to comment on the two-wife-burial assumption defendant is reported to have made; and which was directly the cause of his arrest."

"We object," mechanically interposed counsel for the defense.

"Evidence of such remark, on the part of defendant, has not been produced in court."

"To shorten matters some," assisted the Court, "I will venture to say, prisoner had two wives. His assumption of single-marriage, good Christian though he says he be, would seem absurd to the Court, in view of the fact that our aliens have just testified to his lunacy. What further comment can you make, counsel for the prosecution?"

"I think it final that the prisoner is insane, and should be committed."

"We object, your Honor. We———"

"Mr. Clerk, hand me a blank commitment-form. You may fill it out at your leisure."

"I have had no opportunity to explain my meaning," spluttered forth Weatherton.

"The prisoner must not interrupt the proceedings," came from the bench.

"But it is so unjust. I———" tried Weatherton, again.

"Shut up," screamed the Court, bringing its gavel down with a smart thwack on the hatch.

"I am an American; and I plead my constitutional rights," again ventured Weatherton.

"See here, if you don't shut that worthless, noisy mouth of yours, this Court will cast its dignity aside, and deal severely with your crackleware cranium. I am bailiff here as well as Court. You are already aware of this. The sheriff will assist me. Mr. Sheriff, put a straight-jacket on the prisoner and iron his feet."

"Your Honor," called out counsel for the defense, "I shall institute *habeas corpus* proceedings in this matter. The prisoner has not been conceded his constitutional privilege of fair trial."

"Try *habeas corpus* and be tut-tut," blustered the bench. "We'll not allow *habeas corpus* in this case."

"The American Constitution, your Honor——"

"My dear sir, perhaps you are not aware that the American Constitution was, at one time, submitted to the vote of the people; *and not all of us voted for it,"* pointed out the Court with no small show of animus in its manner.

"Your Honor, I am indignant. I shall submit to the people the matter of your Honor's recall. Recent amendment to the State Constitution grants I may."

"Recall is your only recourse, Mr. Counsel. But please remember my wife belongs to the liveliest set of suffragists that ever caroled and can-

vassed the streets of these parts. I blush for the chance of your success. Next case."

"Your Honor, I desire the defendant, Mr. Weatherton, be remanded to the County Jail, pending appeal to the Supreme Court."

"On what grounds, counsel?"

"I have stated my reasons. This man's rights have been violated; seriously violated. I beg you do not, at once, commit him. It will be impossible to release him, through *habeas corpus* procedure, after he is once confined, even more so than now."

"My dear sir, this Court's patience *re habeas corpus* has quite reached the limit. You ———. But what have we here?"

Someone, one of the ship's stewards, had gotten to the rear of the bench with a small silver-tray well burdened with tempting glasses, brimming to the edge, thus affording highly odorous suggestion of adjournment.

"Beer for me; beer for me," whistled the bench in insecure whispers. Whereat the coveted brew was quickly deposited on the hatch in front. Accompanying this movement on the part of the steward was another very suspiciously like the passing of notes. History records the judicial fingers certainly clasped, within the palm of the learned hand, something that crackled like writing paper; and looked white.

"What is this?" scornfully commented the bench. "Zounds! Here is a penciled communication enclosing a five-dollar bill. Graft! Mr. Sheriff, lock the courtroom doors; and bar the windows. Let us fathom the source of this slur

upon the Court's honor, at once. Mr. Counsel, you take this note, and read it. I will place the five-dollar bill into my pocket as exhibit number one; in what promises to be a famous case of infamy. What does the note tell us?"

"Your Honor! Your Honor!" shouted counsel for the defense, excitedly, "here is most timely light upon the very important matter of Mr. Weatherton's sanity. The note at hand explains away all difficulties of defense. The man you have just committed is not insane. Listen, please, before dismissal of the court."

"Ha, ha, ha, counsel. You are a worthy barrister indeed; and very earnest of purpose; but can't you see the present status of our movement for adjournment? Does it not dawn upon your laboriously-prepared and highly-licensed ego that we, the Court, are being served with our meridian-tea? How dare you, sir?"

"Your Honor, Francis X. Weatherton has told you he was resident of the Island of ———, which lies precisely upon the 180th parallel of longitude. There are two distinct villages on this island. Each one contains a church, and burial ground. Weatherton resides in the East village. If he crosses into the West, he *loses a day*. For instance, if he goes to church today, Sunday, in the East town; and, on the morrow, in the West town, it is possible he may attend the same service *twice on the same day at the same minute and hour*. This should, I believe, explain everything. Mr. Weatherton is not insane.

"Very respectfully,

"A. FRIEND."

"Great Zooks! Order, there! Let the Court come to order!" roared the bench excitedly. "Briefly, the prisoner is discharged."

"How about costs, your Honor?" ventured counsel for the prosecution.

"Let the physicians sue the county. Their fees should come to, say, $250 each. As to counsel for the prosecution, why, frankly, I do not believe he deserves a fee. On the other hand, this Court orders that counsel for the prosecution shall set up the drinks to the crowd. The court is adjourned *sine die.*"

SOMETHING ABOUT ORPINGTON OF AUSTRALIA

SOMETHING ABOUT ORPINGTON OF AUSTRALIA

WE knew but very little of Orpington. He was a passenger, by the "Manuka," *en route* from Sydney to San Francisco, via Tahiti. We had encountered him on deck, as indeed we must have everyone sailing with us, trying his hand at shuffle, bull-board and billiards. He eventually turned out to be the most persistent "sport," in the customary sea-faring way, we had ever had the excitement of meeting. Were there things doing on deck, Orpington was certain to be the responsible party. Were there pools on the ship's daily-run, Mr. O. was the *jacasse* (Forgive the use of this word. It is French for king-fisher.) of the occasion. He circulated about the ship, fishing for souls, for all the world like one of the famous laughing-denizens of the colonial air frequently met with in the "bush" hunting for its daily regimen. Cricket on board would have been grossly incomplete without Orpington. He had ever graced occasion: was ever, therefore, sought on occasion. The final games, inclusive of a conventional, though soul-stirring obstacle-race terminating in a canvas-tub of huge proportions, had been distinctively Orpington. Much credit had, however, been due the ship's crew on this occasion, because of a sort of transfiguration our hero had become subject to. For a brief period Orpington had been no longer Orpington. Every one familiar with this part of trans-ocean by-play can realize, without further

distress to our time-blunted pen, what might have been, and certainly was our hero's appearance upon emerging from the complex apparati pertinent with this particular sport. Orpington, too, distributed the prizes. This was done under the auspices of the ship's captain; who graced the event by sitting amiably close beside. Such on board as had failed to adore Mr. O. now found it irresistibly incumbent upon them to bend the knee; and kiss the deft, sportful hand. Days of wearisome pitch and roll, with indifferent speed ahead, meager reward for tired patience, had proven our hero one and indispensable.

Confessedly, I believe all hands had conserved a cheer. Indeed, now I recall it, all hands did cheer; and Orpington (perhaps the captain was intended to be part recipient) was the beneficiary.

Just whom and what was this man Orpington? We have undertaken to record something about him; a brief something. We scarcely feel he was an asset of very wide possibilities. Yet he was an asset.

Henry Jones Orpington was a business-man of no small mental-capacity. Bradstreet and Dun were familiar with him, some. We emphasize the word *some*. The stock-exchange knew him some, too; and the insurance world, a very extensive one in Sydney, was not unfamiliar with him. He was essentially a down-town man. Macquarie Street, the Colonial Pennsylvania Avenue, had however scarcely affiliated. Politics were not a prevailing element in the complex functional-self of our interesting traveler.

He was a business-man. He was a traveling salesman; that is to say on this occasion. Orpington had stock for sale. His heavy-leather trunk, manufactured patriotically in London (he was fond of being English. There was no doubt he was a loyal Britisher.) contained two parts out of three tidily 'graved stock-certificates purporting to have been recently floated in behalf of a certain vendor-company incorporated in New South Wales; and pretending, honorably we feel to the sale of an old established trading-corporation entitled the Pacific Coast Transportation Company.

To put it more grossly, the Pacific Coast Transportation Co., a firm of many years standing, had determined to re-incorporate under its old-time corporation title. New shares, to the value of something like one million pounds sterling, were now in process of circulation at the deft hands of a vendor-company of which Orpington was a director and salesman under a formal contract of what, to Australians, is the conventional broker's fee of ten per cent. Mr. O. was going to America to introduce Australian produce under the trade-mark of the new company; and incidentally to sell the stock. It had dawned upon his fertile mind that certain features of the food-products world familiar to Colonials was not at all so to Americans. There were cured fishes abounding, entirely unknown to the Northern markets, such as smoked warehou, mullet, barracouda, blue cod, etc. *ad nauseam.* Americans he had been assured knew little, if anything, about

the curing of table fishes. There were but two varieties at all familiar to the Yankee *menu,* cod and smoked salmon. The former was, to his more particular fancy, but indifferently good; and the salmon imperfectly cured to the verge of mushiness. The only desirably cured fish to be procured at American tables was the imported English haddock, popularly known as the finnan-haddie. Here was a giant opportunity. The new company should improve upon it; and that with monstrously swelling chances of howling success. As a transportation company it was to be, also, a trading company.

He had with him one hundred thousand pounds sterling worth of five per cent preferred certificates. They were rationally 'graved; though simply. They merely set forth the legend that the Pacific Coast Transportation Company certified to John Doe's ownership of the thereon inscribed number of preferred shares; and were serially numbered, and duly dated as to date of sale.

There was no prospectus. That is, Orpington had none, barring a copy of the Sydney "Mail" in which had appeared an advertisement setting forth the why and wherefore of things pertinent with the new stock issue; and offering shares to the public.

It will be seen that Orpington was playing a sort of double game. While selling shares for the vendor-company he was at the same time acting as salesman for the prospective new corporation. But this peculiar "kink" happened to have

been of no moment to the interesting issue we are about to record.

On arrival at San Francisco; and after much pow-wow with Customs Inspectors; followed by ultimate success, in bond, for our hero, Orpington found himself comfortably domiciled at the attractive St. Francis Hotel.

Charming weather! April in California (it was April) always is! The green-clad hills surrounding the unrivalled Bay of San Francisco were yellow with buttercups. Our traveler had first espied this from quarantine anchorage. He had glanced naively from wild-flowers to masthead flag. Both were yellow. Both ominous therefore. But our man's better nature had prevailed; and he had rivetted his gaze determinedly on the distant hills, fancying he saw their seductive slopes likewise blue with baby-eyes and fantastic with pansies. He had heard accordingly. American fellow-travellers had told him of them. They hadn't forgotten, too, to picture to his too-salted imagination the dense beds of alfileria, clovers, mint, red-top, wild rye, cheat, oats and other grasses peculiar to Spring. His mind involuntarily wandered back to New South Wales; and he saw, again, its promising fields of lucerne; surrounded, as it were, amphitheatre-like, with orchards of oranges, apples, pears, "date-plums" and "waller-nutes." He had left fairy-land but to reach it. Someone at his elbow had pointed out a grove of eucalyptus, the blue gum. He had nearly shouted for joy; but refrained.

"Pity!" his informant had remarked, "we

Americans plant your darned gum-trees 'most to kill; why don't you do the square now by trying our sugar-pine?"

This had required no response; and it had gotten none.

On arrival at San Francisco, we repeat, Orpington had found himself comfortably domiciled at the St. Francis. It is scarcely needful to add he at once set about scheming for the wherewithal to float his imported interests. Money was immediately necessary. He had brought but very little with him; possessed as he was with an abundance of native self-assurance, which always seemed a timely and capable friend. But the necessity of money now poignantly appealed to him, the ultimate success of his venture proving to his very logical conscience ponderously dependent upon it.

How should he get it?

An unusually inquisitive, we may say, trifling, clerk now became a salvator. Orpington found some difficulty just then, in explaining how the thing had worked; but it had.

He remembered having told the inquisitive clerk, the evening of his arrival, while both were imbibing in *demi tasses au crême Gervais,* the why and wherefore of his visit to California. In plain enough words he had explained his connection with a firm known as the Pacific Coast Transportation Company without actually wearying his overworked acquaintance of the occasion by adding much qualifying detail. As a person, therefore, recently come from Australia who had stock-certificates bearing the legend Pacific Coast

Transportation Company for sale, our friend Orpington had become, on first appearance, defined to the hotel people.

While sitting in his bed-chamber conning over the situation, he was startled by the entrance of a morning mail beneath his door. He had become very attentively lost in thought; and the tiny swish-swish of the numerous envelopes, as they made their appearance beneath the door, did not fail to attract his attention. He uttered an exclamation of surprise; and seizing the half dozen letters, broke the seals eagerly, as only an astonished one will.

A bank bill fluttered out of the first envelope. Its denomination proved to be $500. Orpington gasped for breath; and sank back into his comfortable chair much as one afflicted with some inexplicable terror of the moment. He opened the second envelope. It likewise contained a bank-bill; then the third, fourth, fifth and last. They all afforded the same gratifying result, summing up to a total of $2517, with communications attached averaging less than fifteen words per letter, to wit, "The Pacific Coast Transportation Company will kindly accept enclosed amount in payment for such and such a number of shares of its preferred 5% certificates. Yours truly, John Doe, Richard Roe, *et als.*"

"Marvel upon marvels," gasped Orpington. "Whence cometh this unlooked-for avalanche of meteoric gold? In venturing through the Golden Gate have I, as it were, gone too far 'beyond the gates'; and witlessly departed the cosmic and

shapeful existence of the earthly? Am I still in the land of the never-to-be satisfied living; or am I soaring above want in a newly discovered golden world of too-much? How is the advent of this money to be at all explained?"

More mail arrived and with it more money.

"I have it," concluded our hero. "The hotel clerk has advertised my arrival; and these are natural results."

It required but a little while to dictate replies to the hotel typiste; and enclose his several correspondents the desired certificates.

Ten days passed, and Orpington had found himself a depositor in one of the local banks to the grand total of $500,000. This money had all arrived by mail. Not a correspondent had been met with. No explanations had been required of him, or made.

Our guileless hero had departed on his return trip to Sydney, letter of credit in hand, without so much as suspecting the oddity of circumstances beyond having given vent to his first impressions.

"The way they do things in America!" he commented as land faded in the distance. "By Jove, how jolly lovely to live here, if such extraordinary bursaries in life do really prevail; and I haven't the least doubt they do, don't you know."

On his return to Sydney a meeting of the vendor-company directors was at once called. Of course the immediate reason of this was Orpington's commission, 10%. He had sold 100,000 lbs.

sterling worth; and his fee would therefore come to 10,000 lbs. sterling.

"Gentlemen, I now have the extreme pleasure of handing you a check for 90,000 lbs. sterling, the remainder representing my commission, is on deposit in a Sydney bank."

After some demur to the effect that the articles of the company called for the payment of 10% into said company's hands; and not directly into the purse of any of its personnel: but final admission that, after all, Orpington's view of the matter was but just; to-wit, every man his bursaries in proportion to his merit, results were conceded, and the fee allowed.

The meeting had adjourned; and our hero turned to leave. The massive door of the meeting-chamber had swung suddenly open with heart-rending jeopardy to all in its vicinity. A policeman entered. He accosted Orpington.

"I have papers for your arrest, sir. Will you be kind enough to consider yourself my prisoner."

"For my arrest!" exploded our interesting friend. "And what is the complaint?"

"Embezzlement in America. You are wanted in San Francisco."

"Ridiculous, don't you know. Quite absurd! Why, what is this? So-and-so, and so-and-so, having purchased such-and-such numbers of shares in the Pacific Coast Transportation Company now demand the arrest of one, Orpington; and his return to America, there to answer the charge of felony-embezzlement in the sum of

$500,000. I appeal to you gentlemen!" turning to the Board of Directors.

"Is this not outrageous! What is to be done!"

"Return to America; and answer the charge," responded they, all.

"Precisely what I should have proposed myself," vouchsafed Orpington. "There has been some misunderstanding, certainly drastic, at the other end. Officer, proceed."

The final chapter of our little "something about" finds our friend Orpington once again at San Francisco; and in jail. There had been no difficulty, however, in obtaining bail. He had brought stacks of money this time, with him; and the elegant St. Francis had certainly strongly appealed.

On a particular morning during the first week of July, Orpington found himself cornered in his chamber by the most terrifying crowd of vengeful citizens that ever congregated to the all-prevailing tune of justice.

"We want our money back; and this man in the penitentiary!" they howled into his face and ears.

"Peace, peace, friends! I will explain, I will explain! *that is, if I can!* You quite puzzle me! I cannot account for——"

"Exactly so! We know you cannot account for it all. But give us back what you have left; and that in a hurry! See!"

"My dear friends!" tried Orpington again. "You are quite absurd! You are jolly unjust. He, he, he!"

Here was an attempt, a sad one, at laughter. "I really, don't you know, am not floating stock for a lunatic-asylum. I must request you——"

"I propose we lynch this Britisher right here!" shouted someone.

"Gentlemen, I conjure you, do not depart from gentle ways," butted in another quite as excitedly, though scarcely as roughly. "Let us draw together; and take this man's deposition. It will prove of inestimable value at the trial."

"Spoken like a lawyer," volunteered someone. "But friends beware of these gentler methods! They mean gigantic attorney-fees and small returns. We, our crowd, propose horse-whipping this darned Englishman until he hands over the spoils; and every red cent of it, too. Jack, have you got that rope? Toss it here! We'll just bind his arms; and tie him up to the chiffonier. Take your coat off! Come now, take your durn——'

"Hold on there, please! Please don't proceed further! I beg you listen gentlemen!"

This came from someone struggling to get into the room. He was holding a coffee-colored printed folder above the heads of the crowd and endeavoring to shake it in the face of the rough customer with the horse-whip. He had somehow succeeded in flicking it painfully into his eyes; hence the climax.

"Keep that durn paper away from my face!" blustered the 'bad man.' "What are you trying to do, anyway?"

"I am a bell-boy of this hotel; and I believe

I know the circumstances of this case better than you. Read this folder."

The "bad man" reluctantly, and quite out of the corner of his eye, glanced at the coffee-colored print. He read; and this is what he found there!

"The Pacific Coast Transportation Company.

A New Enterprise Based on Boundless Possibilities.

San Francisco to Los Angeles by Automobile.

Tourists! Tourists! Way-passenger Service! Just the Thing for Commercial Travelers!

The Original Draft of a Stupendous Program."

Deathlike silence prevailed now. The "bad man" had drawn forth a large red handkerchief; and was mopping his forehead. The bell-boy, having made certain of a decided hit, was worming his way back to accustomed hallway haunts. For some minutes no one ventured remark. Orpington was the first to speak.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen!" he shouted gleefully. "I have it. It is all a mistake! God bless that boy! I am quite innocent of wrongful intent, I assure you. I am what I reputed myself to be, a salesman for the Pacific Coast Transportation and Trading Company: not the auto-

mobile stage-line proposed in this coffee-colored notice!"

"Augh! Augh!" growled one or two in the rear; and then slunk out of the door.

"Humph!" grunted the "bad man" and added "May be a mistake boys, after all. Better give him a chance to speak."

"The certificates I sold you are as good as gold in an Australian Company, of great possibilities. You supposed me the manager of this automobile-line which, I honestly declare, I knew nothing at all about. I am not even aware of where these folders may be obtained."

"They were circulated downstairs some weeks ago," shouted the very timely bell-boy from the rear.

"Suffice it to say, gentlemen and ladies, you are honorably represented abroad; and your money wisely invested. I bid you all a very good morning. I am quite fatigued with the excitement of this most extraordinary occasion; and beg a little privacy. Good-morning, good-morning!"

"Augh! Augh!" We'll see, we'll see, at the trial next week! We'll see! We want our money——"

The door had unceremoniously slammed in their faces. Exeunt.

THE EPITOME PUBLISHING
COMPANY

THE EPITOME PUBLISHING CO.

SEVENTEEN stories above the pavement we found a long-sought-for legend, neatly written upon the frosted pane of a conventional office door. The Epitome Publishing Company's sign effected, we judge, to inform one of the very certain fact that there, and particularly there, existed some sort of a company, or business-concern, engaging in the art of publishing. There were no quotation marks surrounding the word Epitome: neither was it italicized or illuminated. We take it, therefore, that the persons within were guiltless of magazine or journal-issuance. They were the Epitome Publishing Company; just a company known to the world as the Epitome. Of this qualification, however, more as we proceed.

Of course we needn't knock. Whoever dreamed of such troublesome ceremony in the immediate presence of printer's ink and—the devil? We merely entered and blinked. The atmosphere was not dusty; nor yet smoky. It was of the customary devilishly inky sort; saturated with sunshine (bright sun, but more cobwebby we suspect than a desirable janitor of highly-writ character should pass with impunity) and pure, really pure, with the odor of newly applied pigment of the printers' craft. This was a typical printer's shop; and accepting it as nothing more extraordinary than one such, we approached the overburdened counter, behind

which sat the reigning sovereign of the place; and plied our thoroughly rehearsed inquiries.

"Mr. Pennington?" we presumed.

"At your service," came back, very much aside and in manner contrived to work no serious stoppage to matters busily active.

"What is your specialty; or haven't you one? Some magazine?" We had guessed not, we repeat; but such happened to have been our first essay toward what we had, while arriving, schemed out a successful speaking-part in the drama to be. "Or, perhaps, a journal,—a weekly?"

"No particular publication," came back again. "Everything. Books; books. Novels. All sorts of books. We epitomize. Do you grasp me? We condense. There, there is a sample of our work. You see it is a copy of the 'Gorgias,' Plato's 'Gorgias.' Open it; and discover for yourself."

We did accordingly; and were somewhat pleased with results. We turned to the first page; and read

Gorgias
or
On Rhetoric

Literally Translated with Notes by H——— C———, M. A.

With an Introduction by E——— B———, Jr.

Philadelphia,
——————— Publisher

Page No. 1.

Callicles, Socrates, and Chaerephon in dialogue.

Callicles invites Chaerephon to his house to hear a discussion between Socrates and Gorgias.

Page No. 2.

Callicles, Chaerephon, Socrates, Gorgias and Polus.

They, in dialogue, discuss the character of Gorgias' occupation in life.

Page No. 3. ———

"And here is Homer's 'Odyssey'," continued he. "Judge for yourself; judge for yourself," he added, perhaps anticipating inquiry on my part. "I will vouchsafe, however, a little by way of addendum. We are an educational concern. We are undertaking the education of the masses. Guess Me? Indifferent readers, they who have little time to spare will read us; and thrive in certain society peculiarly exclusive to the illiterate. Jones, for instance, has read very little in a legitimate way. He has, however, devoted himself to our publications. A very simple matter, requiring little expenditure of time or money. Some one in company—it may be in very particular circles—suggests, let us say, 'Wanderwhither' by Sally Sayer, an obscure work of an equally obscure writer. 'Wanderwhither' has scarcely been worth while *in full print.* Jones, however, has found it in our list of publications; and remembers certain lines. 'Quite familiar with the work,' responds he happily. 'Beautiful couplets in the seventh chapter. Let me see. Run something like this:—

'Wanderwhither, wanderwhither!
Ever sparkling dew-drops gather;

Murmuring 'midst rocks and heather!
Thou art sunshine, rainbow, weather!'

I appreciate Miss Sayer's work very much, I assure you.' Thus Jones *has passed;* and may enjoy the evening as guilelessly and conscience-free as the professor sitting next him. Philanthropy, philanthropy, if you grant education be, is the noblest calling on earth. We deem our institution philanthropical to the verge of things eleemosynary in the extreme. Grant we are doing good? Can you? Pshaw, sir! We have developed a little kingdom of pastime and, we may add, righteousness in our publishing-scheme. We epitomize, sir, we epitomize the world! Grant we know it well? The true secret of life is not in its fullness; but quality. We are not placing our faith in the grossness of things; but the prettiness."

"Are you incorporated?" we ventured, perhaps crudely, shifting the sentiment.

"Yes. Our prospectus! Have one," and a lengthy document of the conventional type was reached us. It read:

7% Cumulative First Preferred Stock in the Epitome Publishing Company $500,000 Issue.

Preferred as to Both Assets and Earnings.

Quarterly Dividends. Stock Redeemable at Option of Company in Whole or in Part at 120.

Capitalization.

7% Cumulative First Preferred	$100,000
7% Cumulative Second Preferred	$100,000
Common	$300,000

For Details Regarding This Issue of Preferred

Stock; and the Business of the Company, We Refer to the Accompanying Letter Signed by the President of the Company; and Briefly Summarized as Follows:

1. Officers and Managers of the Company Will Purchase $50,000 Worth of Stock.
2. The Company Will Carry No Funded Debt; Excepting Sinking Fund and Mortgage on Premises.
3. The Sinking Fund Will Be Cumulative; and Created Out of Surplus Profits. It is To Be Applied to Redemption of Stock at 120. This Fund will Amount to $15,000 each Year, With Possible Increase But No Diminution.
4. Earnings and Net Profits Last Year, Such and Such Amounts.

Plant has been duly appraised by experts and accounts examined by certified accountants. Messrs. Grabhard, Hindersome, and Firstauf of New York City are Its Counsel. Evermake, Greensome & Company, Brokers,—Broadway, Have This Stock Issue On Sale.

This Advertisement Is Inserted as a Matter of Record, the Entire Issue Having Been Sold.

We failed to repress a sigh of satisfaction as we finished reading; and found ourselves incontinently glancing over the top and bottom lines a second time. Seven per cent stock at 120. Of course this meant actually, something like 5 4/5%. But then this was a very ordinary dodge of our practiced marketers. We wondered, pertinently, whether victims were ever made thus easily. The final notice struck us as very inter-

esting. *This Advertisement Is Inserted As a Matter of Record: The Entire Issue Having Been Sold.* While studying over the document, we confess, that we had dared presume upon, mentally, becoming an investor. Often one will go off, as it were, half-cocked; and buy the world just for fun. But the final assumption of everything-sold-out was certainly an obstacle difficult of surmounting. We let the document flutter to the floor.

"You are not favorably impressed?" inquired the publisher looking up corner-wise from his busy desk. He had resumed work, pending the reading.

"Well, I daresay you are one of many. Give the 'majority' a chance, don't you know. Seems to me that this is a large part of the writ of wisdom. I am very much in the minority. I boast meager possession of shares and no companies. I do not, therefore, feel qualified to judge. Whom are Evermake, Greensome & Company? Are they, likewise shareholders; or are they merely 'shingle-out, walk-in' brokers?"

"They are stock-venders; in other words they constitute a vendor-company; having taken over a number of the shares as security for their brokerage," replied my garrulous acquaintance of the hour. "But," he added, "you have caught me in an unusually confiding mood. Really, sir, believe me, Evermake, Greensome & Company have a very good thing in hand."

"Just how do you mean," we inquired eagerly. "Let me suggest your meaning, now, I fancy my-

self enlightened. This vendor-company is to get a very large commission. What, please?"

"Ten per cent.," was the reply. "But then you see this is quite all aside from my part of the business. I am a printer and publisher. I am therefore, more or less given up to books and reviews. I know nothing of business. I possess a few of the preferred shares; and thus far they have paid me dividends. Respecting brokers' fees, I know nothing; though I must say I have heard of varying charges from 1/4 of 1% to 2% in my immediate neighborhood."

"Ah! I glean," we butted in. "You are impressed very much as I am, if I read between the lines correctly. This 10% brokers' charge does sound extraordinary. Never heard of such a charge before in this country. Not unusual abroad though, say Australia. I am not unfamiliar with vendor-companies. They are supposed to assume the whole responsibility in the matter of floating a new, or rejuvenated corporation. Is not that so in this instance?"

"Precisely. Have a chair. I have kept you standing for an overlong time."

"Thank you. This stool will do very well. What an ingenious world this is to be sure. Evermake, Greensome & Co. are, I take it, no exception to the rule. Tell me, in the meantime the Epitome Publishing Company is running right along on its original capital, paid in; and supporting the vendor company out of its net annual profits?"

"True. You gathered from the prospectus

that the present stock issue was simply being made to rejuvenate the old concern. Of course your way of putting it is somewhat different. The vendor company really deducts its fees from receipts on sales."

"Tell me," we exploded out of a momentary wandering mood. We had been silent some minutes. "Can I have some of that stock by writing to Evermake, Greensome & Company?"

"Why man, you must have observed the final notice to the effect that it had all been sold."

"Yes, yes, but come! Isn't that a trifle meaningless. Why shouldn't I make offers to some of the present holders, you for instance? I hereby offer you $2,400 for two bonds, or better, I write to Evermake, Greensome & Company letting them know where I can get the stock and instruct them to purchase it for me. Your brokers are indeed ingenious. Shall I have to pay a premium for my shares?"

"I certainly will not let mine go at 120," replied the printer.

"Nothing new under the sun, sir, positively nothing! And there are fishes in the sea, etc. But tell me how does the vendor company earn its gains? Surely a very easy matter to sell stock in a promising concern; and I feel yours is promising. There can be no great expense or trouble attached to their part of the contract; and they are to get 10%."

"We are an obscure people here," assisted Pennington. "And Evermake, Greensome & Co. are clever fellows, living in the high lights of

society. They are in 'touch' as it were more so than we. We buy their pretty patronage for our more prosaic though immediate needs. They offer this patronage for sale. Why shouldn't we buy it of them? One always expects to pay, and well too, for this sort of thing you know."

"Looked at from that angle, 10% doesn't seem exorbitant," we vouchsafed. "I know of, and can quote, British Companies who are paying the same rate. I repeat, it is a very usual rate abroad. I have just returned from Sydney, New South Wales, where I found it in daily application. I have passed an instructive quarter-hour here. It is very refreshing to meet with genius. Here I observe, is a copy of the 'Rubaiyat.' Are you going to epitomize it? Quite impossible, I should say."

"Not at all. We shall place 'Omar Epitomized' on the market within the week."

We opened the volume resting on the counter in front of us to verse LXIX and read:

'No Parable, but Plain Truth it is to say,
That we are Chessmen, Heaven plays the game,
Moving us across the checkered squares of Life;
And one by one replacing us in the box of Nothingness.

Again, Verse LXXXVII:

'Yesterday, I went to the workshop of the Potter;
Where I saw two thousand pots.—
Suddenly cried out a Querulous One,
'Where is the Potter, the Seller, the Buyer—' "

Meditatively we closed the volume and bid

this printers' Paradise farewell. We soon found ourselves in the street below; and welcoming a bright May sunshine; but none the less convinced we had just departed another world of lesser dimensions where the sun shone equally brightly; and with cheer. The Epitome Publishing Company indeed, intended to instruct the world by ridding it of some of the plethora nuisance in literature. We wondered not a little at the past that it should have ever seen this very desirable innovation; and its inestimable value to civilization. We were burdened with nuisances on earth. Here we should rid ourselves, as it were, by turn of pen, of one of them. Plethora in authorship, something worse than redundancy, had become a modern affliction. Redundancy was contemptible; and might be gracefully disregarded; but plethora! What a task it is, that of reading, sometimes, to be sure? We had, within the fortnight, laid Sir Philip Sydney's "Arcadia" regretfully aside; because it seemed, at a glance, vastly too plethoric for average bosom-absorption. A beautiful work, "Arcadia," it is needless to say; but quite too much of a task. Oh, if we had but met with the Epitome Company; and gotten this splendid work boiled down to one-third its quantitative value! We remembered having mastered Universal History in this form during the days of our youth. What if we had had the several authors to digest. Just fancy having to qualify in many-volumed Grote or Gibbon! Truly Providence hath ways of mercy!

Some weeks passed; and having possessed our-

selves of two of the Epitome Company's bonds, we once more dropped into the little printing establishment on the seventeenth story. There was an ominous sign on the door but we didn't stop to read. No doubt it betokened naught beyond the ordinary. Near-sighted people (we were partial to glasses) never do see ominous signs intelligently. An amenity to blindness is just this peculiarity. The difficulty in reading anything at all justifies evasion by the eye.

We pushed the door in; and entered. A remarkable change had taken place since our last visit. The quantities of dusty manuscript and partly completed issues had disappeared from their wonted nooks and corners. The office had been cleaned up; and, we soon found, nearly cleaned out. The same welcome sun was struggling, however, through the same cobwebby window-glass and positively, (I think there may be small doubt only) the same smile prevailed on the same face which had greeted us formerly. Mr. Pennington had not "cleaned out."

"Good morning," he ventured, cheerily enough, as we turned toward him inquiringly. "Quite a transformation?"

"How do you account for it?" we inquired concernedly.

"Vendor-company, New York, failed for one million dollars! About two weeks ago! It held one hundred thousand dollars cash to our credit! We are now in the hands of trustees; and probably will be at the mercy of receivers shortly. Sad isn't it?"

We were speechless with amazement. Our $2,400, plus brokerage! Where was it? In simple mood of despair we inquired as much.

"No knowing! Cheer up, however! Evermake, Greensome & Company may contrive partly to pay up, say 50%. We think it safe to place our hopes that high."

"I have it; I have it," we shouted suddenly possessed of an illuminant idea we felt certain might prove salvation for the lost cause. "Let us organize a vendor-company; and sell the remainder of that stock. You say there is $400,000 worth still unmarketed."

"So they wrote us. But I do not comprehend you. We are in debt one hundred thousand dollars. If we proceed, we shall have to assume that debt."

"Very true, very true; but I propose we act as vendor-company for Messrs. Evermake, Greensome & Company. They must reorganize. They cannot permit themselves entirely driven off the earth! Make me Manager of this thing. I will go to New York; and see these people with their receivers, about it. They must listen to my proposal. I shall open a broker's office in lower Broadway; and offer Evermake, Greensome & Company's preferred stock and bonds for sale. I shall require 10% commission on sales; and, having contracted with the Epitome Publishing Company to turn the net profits into its hands, I shall soon find a way to liquidate the $100,000 debt."

"But we are in trust with one of the local

companies! Now I recollect, however, there are clauses in the trust-deed, making the trust provisional upon our personal management of the issue. We are articled to report only to the Trust Company. We hope to escape receivers by hiding under the wing of a Trust Company, you know. I don't mind confiding in you. You are an investor; and apparently enthusiastic."

"Place implicit confidence in me," we replied. "I will see the Trust Company; and explain the situation. We shall undertake to sell, say, $1,000,000 worth of bonds for Evermake, Greensome & Company, at 10% returns on sales. This will net us $100,000 with which to pay off our debt. We shall also sell the remaining $400,000 worth of Epitome Publishing Company's stock and bonds without charge. I assure you we shall bring you in enough capital to make the resumption of business possible."

"Friend," blustered Pennington, shaking us enthusiastically by the hand, "you are a genius! Go ahead! I endorse your enthusiasm; and will farther your scheme to the finish."

Pennington told us, years after, he had failed to portray half the relief and joy he had felt on this historic occasion. The sunlight creeping through his dusty office-panes, half generously as it were, now seemed magnified in intensity, and cheer, beyond a limit he had ever before been familiar with. His pulse beat afresh a symphonic response to otherwise ill-concealed pleasure; and he ate his luncheon once again as never had he before within the memory of the immediate past.

Suffice it to say the scheme was tried and proven successful. The Epitome Publishing Company flourishes in newer and more promising quarters. The world is without doubt becoming enlightened. Pennington says so; and certain it is the publishing business everywhere has increased ten-fold in volume. The high cost of living has made the less-costly book desirable to the average plodding citizen. This average person must have books to read. What does the difference between Dickens, or Thackeray (in Epitome) and they in full-writ, signify to him? The drain on his pocket-book has not been as large; likewise wear and tear on eyesight, and we might add, patience.

Our bonds are flourishing. They are paying 7% per annum on a par value of 120. And, too, the entire issue has been sold out. "We merely publish this for record."

THIS TIME IT WAS MUFKINS

THIS TIME IT WAS MUFKINS

THE *feuilleton* editor of a local daily had sent, requesting a contribution for his department.

"Must have it; must have it," wrote he. "Short of material. Please get to work; and at once. You and Mufkins are our best contributors. I mean your work is the more popular. You are read with more avidity, I feel assured, than others on our staff. Kindly send us something within the week."

Now Mufkins was a fellow-boarder; and rival enthusiast. It had been, from time immemorial, our several intentions to beat—excel—one-another in the potent art of weekly journalism. Both of us had received more or less merited praise for our efforts in print. Both of us had continuously gotten our pay; and I feel constrained to say it had been becomingly generous.

But both of us wrote very much alike. Our chosen themes were similar: our spirit much the same. Naturally we felt a certain amount of childish rivalry: and were ever ready, within ourselves,—Mufkins has confessed—to spit upon each other's image at each and every turn of our several daily walks.

This sort of thing in life is not comfortable: neither is it at all desirable. A peace conference had been determined upon as the next thing in order. We had finally concluded this course incumbent upon us; and began arranging matters in accordance with it. Pursuant with the *feuilleton*

editor's request we had taken up our pen one bright May morning—glorious weather—and scratched off the following:—

THE MISSING PENCIL.

We were of that certain few who carried pocket-pencils. Not to say that we had become old-fashioned and passeé. We were addicted to fountain-pen use, too, permit us to add in self-defence. We were not carpenters, to be sure, condemned for life to the constant use of the ever-present scribing-crayon: nor yet custom's inspectors chalky with material devoted to the back-scratching of yellow-featured immigrants. We, bye-the-way distinctly remembered when, at the port of San Francisco, this back-chalking habit had become very usual and fully accepted as 'the' thing. We hold in our mind's eye pictures of crowded, and much hurried, creatures clad in the national coolie-blue: each and every blouse crossed on its back with chalk; and each and every wearer thereof mounting the gang-plank of some convenient bay or river steamer, for transhipment across the bay, strictly in accordance with contract terms. These were the days of contract-labor. They have long faded out of the memory and understanding of the average plodding citizen.

It was an oriental who had stolen our pencil. We were resident in San Francisco, not far from the Chinese quarter. Indeed this was significant of nothing. Many of the most expensive institu-

tions of the West stand on an eminence within pistol-shot of the proverbial opium-joint; yet are quite immune.

We were of that certain few who carried pocket-pencils, we repeat; and had "missed" one. There were usually, we may add, two or three "kicking around": but one of them, distinctively that we desired mostly, had disappeared. This little implement of ornament and use had been of the hexagonal variety, varnished in pale orange. It is scarcely possible we could have been mistaken in the color. Pity the color-blind dear reader, for they know not the foibles of the factor; nor his otherwise erratic characteristics. We ask for orange; and we get lead-pencil color. Now really we should have been sold a chrome. There is very little of the chrome suggestion in orange varnish.

And still this is all neither here or there. We had "missed" a pencil: of course we mean we had "lost" one; and it had deliberately rolled from our study-desk, spite of its six flattened sides. Our desk was not of the much-inclined sort. There was but very little declivity to justify this particular pencil's rolling propensity. But it had rolled; and a Chinese servant become its redeemer.

It was an oriental who had "stolen" our pencil. We use the word "stolen" advisedly we think: for it had not been returned to its wonted niche in the desk: neither had report been made as to its finding. We were much concerned at its theft: and yet it had been one of the cheapest

variety, costing not over five cents. It had been purchased at the hands of an ordinary street mendicant. Marketed by a pauper; and stolen by a Chinaman. We have consulted the oracle since, dear reader, and determined that, after all, that pencil did not belong to us. It had come to us vitiated by the dust of poverty; and had gone to the goal, in nowhere, only oriental travelers with smelling-bottles dare venture upon. It had not been a desirable possession at either end of its destiny. It had been worse than nothing. We shouldn't recommend the getting of more like it at any sort of bargain. It had been an unlucky pencil. We were well rid—but stop. We had employed that pencil in the signing of chit-cards. These of course had been meal accounts— we patronize the bar on rare occasions only, if at all—*and hereby hangs a tale.*

As we reached the finale of our prologue, there came the usual morning breakfast-knock on our door. We were served in our rooms: that is, the writer was. We hadn't reached Mufkins sufficiently yet to warrant record of his daily habits. Our *garcon* had brought a delightful little repast on this particular morning. There were unhulled strawberries dressed in their own leaves oe'r-topped with cracked ice. And the eggs were boiled with the strictest imaginable regard for limitation. They were just right; likewise the coffee. We were fond of Turkish coffee. It was not usual to partake of it during morning hours: but we did. Much to the disgust of cer-

tain Italian boot-polishers whom effected a well-patronized shining-stand on our corner, we were extraordinary indulgers in the Turkish variety, we repeat. Of course everything of that sort must have appealed strongly to the Italian antipathy. Just how these little folk of the corner-store had gotten possession of knowledge of our Turkish-coffee proclivities seems to have been through fault of our own. We had incontinently remarked that, while on a sojourn in Italy, we had discovered the presence of the Turk in the Roman *chianti*. It had tasted and smelt like the Turk. Was the Moslem invading Italy through the medium of its foibles? It certainly tasted that way. Of course this had been mere fancy; and we had ever considerately filed off the ragged edges of possible controversy by laughing gaily at our own conception much in the manner of one uncomfortably apologetic.

Our coffee, on this morning, had been particularly delightful. Suffice it to say we were indulging liberally, when the door—already half-open—opened wide; and Mufkins presented himself.

"Morning, morning," advanced he stepping into my room.

"Ah, Mufkins. Happy, happy! Come in. Have a chair."

"Thanks. Lovely weather! Consider this a great favor on my part. Should have gone to the park this delightful A. M. I assure you, you are now under deep obligations to me, for this call. I don't usually cast my favors abroad

so very very foolishly; and upon every one, too, you know."

"Not at all, Mufkins. Do you see anything particularly unmanly and "easy" about me, that you dare talk that way? Sit down and behave yourself; or I shall eject you forcibly from the room. Here, here's a chair."

"You know I'm always more or less disagreeable during working hours. I prefer to be. Keeps me sober, you see. The old adage of 'look pleasant; and get busy' doesn't appeal to me in the least, when I've really got work to do. Have you lemons on your breakfast-tray? Tush, man! You're not going to spoon that precious egg up whole? That is not the correct way to eat an egg! Now see! There you go spilling a large part of some of Nature's beautifullest work all over your plate. Let me instruct you in the art of eating boiled eggs. Of course I mean soft-boiled. No gentleman ever ventures upon the more indigestible sort, you know. There; you place your egg in the small end of your cup, so: cut the end off with a skillful swing of your knife; and dip your spoon in vertically. Mind, *vertically!* Never attempt to shovel your egg out of its shell. Lift your spoon out vertically; and let it empty itself of its contents before placing it into your mouth. You are entitled to only such as adheres to the spoon. This is the particular and correct way to eat a boiled egg. Do you not realize eggs are luxuries; and a good egg being a *rara avis* (Ha, ha, ha!) should be treated with great delicacy?"

"Mufkins, I—distinctively I— am eating this breakfast! Next thing you'll growl at my strawberries; because I found it necessary to hull them myself. How now?" We replied a little vexed.

"Send those strawberry-hulls down stairs; and request a reduction of account! Of what use are they to you? Are you going to pay for them? Then order up some *mayonnaise;* and make a salad of them. Come, now, be councilled by me whom knows better. Are you a wage-earner that you must thus do manual, and menial, labor at table?"

"Now Mufkins, please stop. What do you wish of me this morning? I'm very busy. Have just begun a story for the 'News.' I understand you have been asked to contribute again. How about that?"

"Just so, just so. And, briefly, I propose we work together in this instance. What say?"

"Well, well. Rather sudden, you know. I dare say, you—— But have a cup of this delicious coffee. You will? There, tell me, did you ever find anything quite as good? Our landlord's *chef* certainly knows how."

"Do you know, I've been strangely persecuted lately. Persecuted by creditors; and not in the usual way."

"By creditors! Not in the usual way! How then, pray?" we ventured wonderingly.

"Grant I am a victim of delusion, if you will. But—— Just pour me more coffee. Conscience! I believe this is the fourth cup this morning.

You're an oddity, bye-the-way, partaking of Turkish coffee at this hour of the day."

"Well now, Mufkins. It appeals to your fancy, too!"

"Quite right, quite right. What have you been writing about? The theme of your contribution, you know?"

"Stop. You were about to tell me of certain delusions; or of persecution, whatever you may chose to style it."

"Yes. But you will join me in this work for the 'News,' wont you?"

"Why? Why on this occasion, though never before?" we queried a little petulantly, perhaps.

"Have you a lead-pencil about you?" he continued.

"I've just lost one; the only one I had," we replied disinterestedly.

"Piffle! Muggins! Tush! Must have a pencil! Come friend, let me search your desk."

"Mufkins what has possessed you? What do you mean! That would be a liberty I allow no man! Surely you're in a merry mood to-day. Have more coffee. There," we vociferated excitedly, perhaps.

"You will consent to let me accompany you in the completing of your contribution to the "News"? he persisted.

"Why" replied we slowly; and marvelling not a little "yes, if it will please you. How shall we go about it? I have already begun, you know."

"Listen," came unconditionally from my odd acquaintance. He had pulled his chair more

closely; and was gazing inquiringly, steadfastly, into my eyes. "This very day I have turned away seven—not less than seven—creditors who clamored, clamored, sir, clawed at me for their money. And after having successfully—temporarily, at least—gotten rid of them, I have experienced certain elucidation upon the matter. A pencil-ray of light, in other words, has come in answer to my prayers. By this I, whom am creditorless may solve the meaning of this unhallowed visitation, these bill-presenters. You are now inclined to hear me. Thank God!"

"Last evening" he continued, after a pause for rest "not less than thirteen creditors called upon me with demands aggregating fifty-thousand ($50000) dollars. Fifty thousand, sir."

"And you have evaded payment of them all?" we queried sympathetically?

"All of them, for the time being. But they have organized; and are to have a meeting. Then——"

"Mufkins, what have I to do with your debts? If you cannot care for them—nurse, and wean them—as every competent man should? Why do you call on me?"

"Let me have your lead-pencil a minute. Please do. I have quite forgotten mine."

"Here is a pen. I told you I had lost my pencil," we replied tartly. "Will pen and ink do?"

"No. But after all, don't bother," he responded.

"I forgot to add my pencil was stolen; and I

think by my Chinese servant" we explained further. "You say your creditors have organized. Are they to prosecute; or dont you know?"

"Prosecute! You mean sue, I presume. Have me declared insolvent; and all that sort of thing? They haven't determined as yet. The matter is still in its infancy."

"But stay," he continued, after another pause for rest. "The worst is yet to be unfolded you. I have told you there were more callers this morning. Most of them were creditors. One of them, however, presented an order on me for fifty-million ($50 000 000) dollars. China is negotiating for a loan to this amount; and I have been chosen mortgagee."

"Mufkins. You alarm me" cried we, rushing toward the door.

"Not so fast; not so fast! Come back and sit down; I beseech you. You see I am quite calm. I have not gone mad. There are no rabid signs of madness, now, are there?"

"But Mufkins" we replied, resuming our former seat, Turkey Morocco, and Guatamala: likewise Nicaragua wish for loans, too. Have you been called upon to accommodate them also?"

"Not yet. I expect to be, however. Do you know" he leaned forward; and pierced me with his eyes, "that Chinese loan-order was written in pencil on the back of a dinner chit-card."

"On a chit-card!" I replied, perplexed not a little.

"Yes; and signed by Dr. Tang Sao Yi, premiere of the new Chinese Republic."

"Really, Mufkins, you are extraordinary. But tell me, why should this alarm you? Perhaps it is only a practical joke. I haven't the least doubt certain persons are playing a prank at your expense."

"Joke? No. Listen further. That chit-card order, for a Chinese loan, had a small lead-pencil attached to it by a piece of yellow cord."

"Well, well?"

"Well. Will you kindly let me see your lead-pencil?"

"Ah, I see. I am to be implicated in this affair. Mufkins, I accuse you of being an out-and-out bunko-sharp, and if you don't have a care, I will get to that 'phone by the door——"

"Stop. Don't be hasty. Impetuous sir, don't go off at half-cock that way, and spoil a good thing. Suppose we go in together in the matter of this loan! Let me see, $50,000,000 at 6% will yield $3,000,000 annual interest. Why, we shall be lords; lords of all things desirable on Earth."

"And how about your debts, Mufkins?" we inquired pertinently; though we had lost much of our wonted patience by this time.

"Debts? Tush! We can hypothecate their payment upon presentation of the facts of our case to the public. Can't we anticipate returns on the great loan?"

"Mufkins you are silly, and—and—no, not flat. You are just silly. You'll wish me to believe, next thing, that that chit-card and pencil were mine. Do not I guess you rightly?"

"I have assumed nothing of the sort. Neither,

I hope, have I suggested such *denoument*. I have indeed repeatedly asked you for your lead-pencil, but how have I managed to couple your pencil with a chit-card, and it an order for $50,000,000? Finally how very suspicious you are? Has the mere mention of lead-pencil in any way warranted your conclusions?"

"I cannot help thinking you are 'green goods.' You are trying to wheedle money out of me. Say, now. You are short? How will a loan of five-dollars do? Here it is." We tossed him five, rather vexedly.

"My dear sir," returned he, "you cannot have that lost—or stolen—pencil back for less than seven-hundred and fifty thousand dollars. My price, I repeat, is $750,000."

"Mufkins, were you born rich, that you lisp in such exorbitant figures? None but unusual people ever dream that high."

"You suggested our clubbing in the matter of this proposed loan," we continued curiosly. "Where are we to get the money? Fifty millions is a large sum."

"Did I not inform you I had a number of creditors. They are naturally, all of them, desirous of our success financially; and they have the organizing-spirit badly."

"Well?" we inquired not a little eagerly.

"I propose we get these men together, select five; form a stock-company, float paper, fully guaranteed, etc., etc.; and gather in that $50,000,000 out of the pockets of the people."

"I am dull, Mufkins! Help me!"

"Simple enough, if you comprehend debit and credit. How are you in contra-per-contra? Do you double-enter and balance? Now, do you usually?"

"Ya-as,—but—"

"But me no pessimistic 'buts.' I'll none of them. We are to organize a loan-company. Let us call it the International Loan Association. We shall issue $100,000,000 worth of 6% cumulative first-preferred bonds at, say, 123. These will pay an annual interest, to their possessors, of something over 5%. We are a new company. We will have no mortgage on premises to assume; or out-standing debts, excepting mine; and these needn't go into the prospectus. Do you grasp me?" He delivered this in something like a hoarse whisper. The latter-half was scarcely audible.

"What, just, shall our prospectus read like?" we assisted, for we felt we wished to go on.

"Something like this. Your stolen pencil sketched it for me, this very morning.

Bond Issue of $100,000,000

International Loan Association

Incorporated Under the Laws of The State of California.

$50,000,000 First-preferred Cumulative 6% Bonds, Redeemable at 123.

Absolutely Guaranteed to Payment of Annual Interest.

This Issue Sub-divided as Follows:

First-preferred Cumulative.....$50,000,000
Second-preferred Cumulative.....$25,000,000
Common $25,000,000

Graspworth, Greenough & Goosey are Counsel.

Nailem, Noolittle & Co., Brokers, Bond Street, N. Y., are selling the issue, all inquiries respecting should be made of this firm.

This Notice Is Inserted for Record. The Entire Issue Has Been Sold.

Of course this is a stereotyped form of prospectus. It is just such as one sees everywhere now-a-days, but deserves repeating, for it cannot be improved upon. I will except, however, a long list of references, favorable opinions, and actual commendation which we will attach later on. How does it seem to you? Good?"

"Quite so. But, tell me, whom is to foot the expense of floating this concern?"

"Why the 'News' publishing company, of course," came back, I thought a little concernedly. "Dear me, how dreadfully wont to belittle me you are? No doubt you have an account with the 'News' company? So have I, but," he added in a whisper, "I can't conveniently collect just yet. The burden will temporarily fall upon you. And

as to your stolen pencil, we will take that Chinese servant into the company as interpreter and abacus-gymnast of the paying-counter. What did you permit that pencil to roll off your desk for? It has been rolling all over the house. It got into my coffee last evening; thence into my dreams. That Chinese servant must have dropped it in the hall-way. It and the chit-card have been rustling against my blind; and tapping on my bed-room window-glass for twenty-four hours past. Whittle that pencil, when you find it; whittle it! But gently! It is a kind and loving little thing. More than that, it is really clever. Cherish it, my friend; cherish and nurse it. Sincerely I believe you have had a good and friendly pencil. Love one-another.

THE HOPELESSNESS OF SOUTHBY'S CASE

THE HOPELESSNESS OF SOUTHBY'S CASE

THE sheer hopelessness of Southby's case strongly appealed. The man was so impossibly vain! How, we reasoned, could ever such a bundle of unnatural nerve and muscle contain continence sufficient to conquer the dull ennui of humdrum toil in trade? Accompanying, too, a peaked condition of corporeal self there appeared an intellect seriously hampered—very—by graceless characteristics that would out.

Southby seldom said "morning" in a good old-fashioned well-rounded "Dutch" way. It always sounded like "moneying," accompanied by an hypothecated understanding his tail-feathers were not to be roughly handled, lest their beauty might become vitiated. The princely air, too, with which he assumed his stool—it was a stool—troubled the sympathetic onlooker not a little. There were "stunts" on Earth; and, to our odd fellow-tradesman, the mounting of an office stool was one of them.

But Southby always conquered, eventually. Like Rostand's dog "Patou," he had lapped up the stars; and what was to hinder. Then, again, after the coveted position at the time-worn counting-room desk had been attained, there followed results. Results with Southby meant solvent conditions. These were something better than ordinary net gains. We desire, dear reader, to publish a facsimile of one of his Profit and Loss balance-sheets as per report of certified account-

ants just across the street. Our firm, it may be well to explain, had adopted frequent examination of accounts by Public Accountants, as a part of its standing-policy. It was not until some months after that the matter had been thoroughly explained away: greatly to Southby's satisfaction. He had been a victim of much unwholesome banter; not unmixed with actual condemnation.

In Acct. with H..... S..... & Co.

* * * * *

Semi-Annual Report. Dated July 1st, 1911.

* * * * *

	Dr.
Premises (Inventoried at 100,000).....	$100,000
Merchandise (Inventoried at 40,000).....	75,000
Cash Balance	175,000
	$350,000

	Cr.
Capital paid up.....	$200,000
Bills Payable	100,000
Merchandise	50,000
	$350,000

* * * * *

	Liabilities.
Capital	$200,000
Bills Payable	100,000
Net Gain	15,000
	$315,000

	Resources.
Premises	$100,000
Merchandise	40,000
Cash on Hand	175,000
	$315,000

Here, indifferently observant reader, of course we had an apt illustration of how one may run a business *without current expenses!* H....., S..... & Co. were represented as making $30,000 net profit or 10% per annum, on an investment of such-and-such an amount, without paying its employees; or otherwise incurring usual costs.

Really the matter needed explaining away; and though much-chagrined, Southby somehow managed to handle the situation mercifully to all parties concerned.

It seemed, upon taking the position of chief accountant, he had been requested, by the house, to furnish an example of his method of accounting. Our people were very particular—excruciatingly so, some of us thought. They required everything in the line of office-work done up to compass-and-rule practice in nicety.

Agreeably, and in obedience to orders, he had drawn up an hypothetical balance-sheet, sufficiently complete, in his estimate, to set forth the beauties of his system. The house had witlessly passed the mock-account on to experts who were innocent of the facts of the case. Current expense hadn't signified: Southby had elucidated upon his knowl-

edge of accounting without it. It was ever a nuisance in business, anyway.

We have said the hopelessness of Southby's case lay in his extraordinary vanity; and this was manifest chiefly in the man's oddity of manner. He always conquered, we likewise repeat. We had had countless encounters with him—word battles, resultant upon difference of opinion *re* office affairs—but were, we are loath to admit, seldom victors. We had become, finally, firmly convinced that our very prosperous little house contained more than one requisite demi-god: and the overflow was Southby. Not to say we deemed him superfluous nuisance. He was, we had graciously determined, on more than one occasion, merely small hurrah necessary to our howl of success: but he certainly was hurrah.

Southby never drank or smoked. Everybody else about the place at least smoked; and our office boy had been overheard communicating the fact to the janitor that the "old gentleman" drank on big dinner nights, like the superintendent of a Western distillery. Of course, these puritanical characteristics made our head bookkeeper's case hopeless in the extreme.

We were ever at loss to determine whether he were popular. Chronic difference of opinion prevailed; and it distressingly.

We had known but little of Southby socially. No doubt he had preferred the exemplary life; for there were concerned whisperings relative to pious and matrimonial inclinations.

Again, he was hopeless. What were we of

more ordinary limitations in life to do with such innovation. We, the remaining clerks, there were three, had not yet presumed so high. We were at least more hopeful cases. We flattered ourselves, not a little, we still had margin, with possibly infinite resources in life. We thought we saw an immense field of hope and income in a future Southby must have, long since, relegated to the past.

Southby was a punctillious man: naturally, therefore, he was punctual. And here his was a hopeless case. Dear reader, you, who have experienced down-town life, at all, must again sincerely sympathize with us in our conclusions. None of us, Southby excepted, durst boast punctuality nearer to perfection than one day in three; and sometimes tardiness had prevailed to such an extent as to make it almost characteristic of the house. Indeed, Southby's case was hopeless!

One sleepy morning—there are such down-town—an individual clad in foreign-made clothes of a peculiarly checkered cloth we all noted at a glance, Scotch with a Colonial tone, stepped into the office and asked for Southby. He was a seafaring man: that is, he looked so. He, however, made it his first duty to correct that impression. "I am from the South Seas," he told us—we were all listeners—"and am a trader. I have followed the sea some: but a number of years ago."

"Delighted to meet you. Have a chair. What can we do for you this morning?" put in Southby.

"To make matters short, my name is Weatherton. I am from the Island of ——— and here to

get capital with which to outfit a fishing and trading expedition."

"Oh, indeed, Mr. Weatherton: but you flatter us of the office. The head of the house is not in——"

"I didn't want to see the head of the house. I know the firm. Have dealt with it for a number of years. I called to see you, Mr. Southby. I can't be mistaken in the name. You are Southby?"

"That is my name, sir," replied our chief clerk.

"I wish to make a popular concern of my venture. I want little people—small investors only."

"Scoundrel!" whispered a fellow-clerk aside; and into Southby's attentive ear.

"What is your scheme in detail, please?" queried Southby yawning, gracefully though, and with much flourish of a dapper-fingered hand, in accompaniment.

"Your firm owns a three-masted schooner—the 'Euphrosyne'?"

"Ya-as." This time our clerk looked up interestedly.

"She is somewhat worn out and leaky; but I propose chartering her, (or, I may add, any other desirable craft peculiarly adapted to my purpose) and putting to sea after turtles, kelp, mackerel, black-fish and porpoise. These are all to be found in abundance off the coast of Lower California, excepting, perhaps, the turtles. These I shall trade for along the coast of Mexico. Incidentally,

I shall take Manta and blanket-fish; and possibly do pearl-fishing."

"Gee!" whistled a fellow-clerk, accompanying it with an arch glance of the eye. Southby did not move a muscle of his face in response. He was much too blasé to think of yielding to any sort of puerile waggishness: and certainly not just then.

"Then, too, the pearl-fishing in the Gulf of California, you know! In fact, I feel assured we shall determine a field of resources, merely by venturing, the average American would little dream of. There have been turtle-hunters—lots of them; and pearl-fishers. There have been porpoise and black-fish hunters too numerous to mention. But I propose combining these industries; and canning—aye, canning—wholesome results in magnificently paying quantities. My first ship is to be a starter for many others. All of them possessed, as they must be, of the uniting spirit in the pursuit of livelihood, will eventually combine into a grand hunting, trading, and fishing trust. And we shall not come within the scope and meaning of the Sherman anti-trust law, either: for we shall not in any sense restrict trade, or interstate commerce."

"Presumably you will call at Cocos Island, Mr. Weatherton; and try for the hidden treasure there?" now came from Southby. It didn't sound at all like him. Amazedly we glared upon him; amazedly, but inquiringly. There was nothing to be discovered about his very genteelly bland face betokening sarcasm, or even levity. We repeat, Southby seldom betrayed himself; and never

capitulated. There certainly should have been betrayal in this instance. How was the man's brazen innocence of manner, the never-to-be-molten sort, to be accounted for?

One of the minor clerks giggled. We turned toward him reprovingly; and he coughed apologetically.

"Precisely! Cocos Island, the Ultima Thule of our dreams! Sir, we shall take a chance at it. Seriously I do not believe in the Cocos treasure—myth. Indeed, I fear it is all a myth. But we shall take a chance at it."

"Really, Mr.—ah—Weatherton, I conclude you are 'hard up'; and desire a 'personal loan.' Am I not right?" suggested Southby in his most elegant way.

"Not at all; not at all. I am in the best of circumstances, just now. Have apartments on the Square: and about everything, in the way of creature comforts; save an automobile and aeroplane. Some day I hope to supply the want. For this reason (and this only) I have called upon you, gentlemen, this morning."

"You—let me grasp—want we should furnish you the means—by which you may—aeroplane. Sir, you are quite beyond us! We are sober people here, sir."

"Very true; very true. I presumed so, Mr. Southby. But you will grant I may 'soar' a little, in finance, to further my interests," replied Weatherton concernedly.

"Then—then you are trying to—to 'come it' on us, Mr. Weatherton," persisted Southby.

"No, sir," replied the man from the Pacific Islands. We thought there was just a hint of indignation in his voice and manner.

"Weatherton, if you want something to eat, here is a quarter," ventured one of the lesser clerks.

There was no reply. Merely a majestic wave of the hand significant of negation.

"Why—why," continued Southby, "did you not go to the house in this matter? It carries means. We clerks haven't any."

"Bless me, I don't want the house should eat me up whole! Cannot you appreciate the point? Respecting a charter of the schooner 'Euphrosyne,' I shall see the house. But this is to be distinctively a popular enterprise. Your firm is hard-shelled—greatly experienced—in the matter of shipping and trade. Can you suppose it taking material interest in the matter of turtle-fishing without first assuming entire command of the enterprise. Such a consummation would cut me out. I prefer to talk with little people."

"What, then, are your immediate plans?"

"We shall have to start a pre-organization stock company."

"Very true. But allow me, Weatherton. Is there any Chinese-smuggling feature lurking in between the lines of your proposal? Pardon my boldness, you know; but——"

"Smuggling? Chinese? No! Ha, ha, ha! Of course I knew you would suggest it. Ha, ha, ha! My dear sir, I have told you I am in comfortable circumstances in life. Can you fancy, for a mo-

ment, a man in my position jeopardizing his very precious liberty by such presumption on government mercy as you suggest?"

"We shall require credentials, Mr. Weatherton. Strictly, credentials!" concluded Southby, lazily turning to his books, and in manner suggestive of "Aw, you go on! We know your sort, here, thoroughly! You're legion!"

"Best of references, I assure you. Messrs. Grantus, Givvus & Guessus are my bankers: Playsus, Holdus & Co. my brokers. You will find me on Dun & Co.'s list marked for $100,000. Not much: but then——"

"Forgive my astuteness; if it seem offensive: but let me suggest, you intend pre-organizing work at the expense of we little fellows. Then you are going to switch over into the moneyed element; and let us flounder." This from Southby.

"My dear sir, I am Francis X. Weatherton, born on the 180th parallel. We observe two Sundays each week at home. Our town is divided into two parts, by the parallel of longitude, making an East and West community of it. If we attend church in the East village today, and again in the West village tomorrow, we shall observe twice on the *same Sunday at the same hour and minute!* I was christened twice, just this way. I have likewise, been baptized, and confirmed, twice: *both on the same day, at the same hour and minute.* Can you fancy such a very 'properly sanctified' personage as I—pardon my egotism—transgressing in the minutest sense imaginable?"

Southby sighed. We likewise sighed; and

deeply. Hush prevailed for some minutes after. They were trying minutes. A fellow-clerk went so far beyond decent conception of life's limitations, as to draw forth his pocket-handkerchief. Southby glanced at his finger-nails; and wondered whether the manicuriste at the St. Francis had really been intelligent of appearance, and otherwise worthy of his very debonaire patronage. But then, characteristic hopelessness was there to prevail. He would try once more.

"Have you pre-organization papers with you?"

"Yes. Here are blank certificates with prospectus attached. The certificates are also receipts. Read, please," replied the marvelous man from the West.

Southby did accordingly:

Subscription Certificate.

* * * *

This is to certify that....., whose address is....., has this, the.....day of....., contributed toward the forming of an enterprise (to be known as the South Pacific Hunting, Fishing and Trading Co., to search for, and take, sea-turtle, black-fish, mantas, blanket-fish, bonitas, mackerel, etc., etc.) the sum of $.....; that said sum is deposited with Messrs. Grantus, Givus & Guessus, bankers, to remain with them until $50,000 shall have accumulated, when it shall be withdrawn, and invested in manner determined upon by the best discretion of a preliminary board of directors, (to be chosen from

the stockholders) in furtherance of the above fishing, and trading enterprise.

Signed.....

For the Company.

Price of pre-organization certificates, $100.

* * * *

Subscribers to our proposed South Pacific Hunting, Fishing and Trading Co. will find further assurance of worthiness, in the management, by close observance of the methods proposed; and herein described, as follows:

Witnesseth: That.....and the South Pacific Hunting, Fishing and Trading Co., parties of the first and second part, respectively, covenant and agree to the following terms, in contract, as follows:

That, ..., party of the first part, in subscribing.....dollars, U. S. gold coin, towards the establishment of an hunting, fishing and trading company in the South Seas hereby certifies that he (she) has received a pass-book, or certificate of deposit, setting forth the length of the deposit-term, and giving the depositor's name.

That said party of the first part herein agrees to permit said money to remain in said bank for said term, or longer, subject to removal, finally, upon the joint certification of like depositors in the interest of the South Pacific Co.

That the South Pacific Co., party of the second part, in accepting the subscription of party of the first part, agrees to handle said money only upon

the joint endorsement of the depositors; and in the interest of the South Pacific Co., for the purposes, and in manner, as specified in its prespectus.

Signed.....

Witness:

.....

.....

"Are you not yet impressed with the desirability of this venture? Cannot you, now, feel it certain of success? You must grant I do. You will admit me enthusiastic? Try a few shares."

Southby yawned; but did not immediately reply. Such was this extraordinary clerk's characteristic hopelessness, he never could be made to reply (save, obliquely) under such circumstances. Finally he drawled forth:—

"Don't want the—the—what did you call them. Do you know—pardon me—I suggest you do not comprehend the best methods in stock-selling. I wish you would be kind enough—no offence, you know—oh, indeed, no offence—kind enough to let me have a few shares to float on commission."

"Have you a pedlar's license, Mr. Southby?" This from Weatherton. Our hopeless clerk withered. He hadn't. He so replied.

"A proper license will cost you just six dollars," continued Weatherton. "It will likewise" he further pursued "be necessary for you to

apply to the Police Commissioners armed with spotless credentials from unvitiated down-town worthies. Can you—can you surmount this difficulty?"

Southby never permitted himself to become irritable. He was a person of wonderfully equable temperament, and no temper. He merely glanced at the ceiling; and, shocking to relate, bit his finger-nails; accompanying the act with a noiseless 'ouch.' One of the minor clerks giggled; but immediately softened the effect by adding something complimentary about Mr. Southby's character.

"I should dislike to trust you, Southby. Green hand, you know." Another soft 'ouch' from our good-natured clerk.

"The placing of preliminary shares requires finessing none but expert financiers, with the standing of a government golf-player, (and quite as fond of hazard) may master.

"Mr. Weatherton, you will forfeit your self-respect—you certainly will—if you keep on. I——"

"You want to sell some of my stock. Well try a few shares. 'Try it yourself; and see how you like it.' Tell me afterwards whether my comment has been pertinent. Try a few shares, then. Here are half a thousand."

"Your presumption, Mr. Weatherton! You have assumed all at once as it were, a phase in argument perfectly unwarranted by any remark of mine, save a very ordinary request for authority to sell your stock."

"Pardon me! Pardon me! Born 'on the fence' (as I was), the razor-edged line of difference between the East and West, I am very apt to portray manner more or less annoyingly irritable. Again, I have been a sailor."

"Not at all; not at all," graciously replied Southby. "I'll sell your stock. I'm sure I want to; and can."

Exit Weatherton, less five hundred shares of pre-organization stock.

CHAPTER II.

Some six, or seven, weeks later our two acquaintances of stock-selling propensity met abruptly on one of down-town's best-patronized thoroughfares. Quite a lapse of time, dear reader. Many, many morning papers had been read; and much of the wide world's troubles digested in these few useless days gone by. Kings had died; and their thrones trembled. Social wars had been declared; and amicably finished. Volcanic disturbances had been somewhat manifest, ultimately resulting in the making of new continents. Great financiers had cried havoc; and despair. Volumes of wondrous ventures, *in prospectu,* had been indicted and filed. Then, too, just fancy the birth-list! Seven weeks lapse of time incorporate within its mystic meaninglessness a large part of everything the most capable intellect on Earth dare not presume to know. It is an attribute of the Almighty.

Southby spoke first.

"Moneying, Weatherton." He meant 'morning' of course.

"Ah, Southby! 'Happy-happy! Indeed happy!' Have you succeeded.

"No. Not quite. Been all this time trying for a pedlar's license."

"Don't say! You don't really mean it!"

"I certainly do. Applied, in person, at the office of Chief of Police. Was referred to the Commissioners. Told I must produce credentials. Handed them some correspondence, from my pastor, I happened to have about me. Was told it was 'no good.' Must get letters from down-town 'famous men.' Took me several days to get them. Had I been peddling for bread and butter, would have starved. Down-town people just would not sign petition; nor indicate letters. No concern of theirs. They weren't peddling. Besides they didn't vote—some of them—for these particular Commissioners. Approached one firm in which I am a stock-holder. Told the manager what I wanted. 'I will leave the matter, with you, over-night. You know I'm a share-holder in your corporation. Think it just you do me this favor. Just a half dozen lines, you know, setting forth my worthiness as a down-town man.' Called next day. 'Well, Mr. X., I want to assure you of my utter inability to thank you in form sufficiently wholesome to properly express my gratitude. Really I shall never, never forget your kindness, your generosity. I——.' 'What do you mean, sir!' came back, not a little brusquely. 'I haven't given you a recommendation yet. De-

termined I shouldn't.' Weatherton, you cannot appreciate the hopelessness of this world, until you have tried it yourself. Let me expatiate further upon this single instance. The firm I applied to was a Bond and Surety Company. Just such an institution as bonds and bails-out every suspected character on earth whom is willing to pay a small fee. And yet—and yet—Weatherton, I scarcely would have been strong enough in faith to have met you face to face, this morning, had not I been rescued. By whom do you suppose? My tailor! I have gotten a license; and my tailor's generous sense of true justice is responsible for it."

"Well, well, and you haven't sold any stock?"

"Not yet."

"Southby, let me suggest, you *are* hopeless."

"Haven't had sufficient time. Give me plenty of opportunity. Here, here's a man, now, I'm sure will take a few shares. 'Moneying, Stimson. Want to talk stock with you! '—' "

"Allow me, Southby. I know Mr. Stimson. 'Morning, Stimson.' "

"Morning."

"Called at your office half an hour ago. Told your clerk not to bother about those Arizona shares. Can't possibly take them. Trying to sell some stock myself."

"Sorry, sorry! Morning!"

"Morning."

"Southby, why be so *awfully* hopeless? That man there, is the selling-agent for a gold-mine down South. Hasn't he approached *you* yet?"

"Augh!"

"Southby, charter an automobile. Decorate it with flags. Fill it with women. Load it with gaily-printed prospecti. Steam about town. Do anything. Do everything. But," very concernedly, here, "don't send the bills to me. I won't pay them. Grasp, do you?"

Southby sidestepped now. Obviously enough he was being made fun of. He was not unfamiliar with the situation. He bit his nether lip severely, for a brief instant; and entered an oral supplicavit.

"I really wish you would instruct me, Weatherton. Initiate me, don't you know. If——"

"Certainly, certainly. Right to the point Southby. The very next thing to have been suggested. Wait a minute. Ah, here comes Snooks. Observe me now. 'Snooks, how do you do?' "

"Delighted, Weatherton, delighted."

"Let me introduce you to Mr. Southby of H—— S —— & Co."

"Pleasure, I'm sure. Very pleased."

"Remarkable rise in local water, this morning." This from Weatherton.

"Water, water? Rise! What sort of water do you refer to Mr. Weatherton?"

"Why the dear old company we've bathed in, and drank from, since time immemorial. Stock is up two points!"

Grunt from Snooks. Much bored, no doubt.

"Investing?"

"Not buying water! Really not in a speculative mood this morning. Water, water! How

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wearisome. Can't you —a—suggest something newer? We have so much water down town, don't you know. Quite confounding. Now, if you had meant steel, I should have gleaned much more readily. You are abstruse! No one thinks of common-place, and always *risqué,* water now-a-days. You are very much 'on the street,' Weatherton. How common, to be sure. Let me divine you. You have 'ship-building' or 'copper' or 'telephone' perhaps, for sale, and would be tickled to the verge of super-human gratitude, if I were to buy!"

"Precisely, I have stock for sale. South Pacific Hunting, Fishing & Trading Co., pre-organization, price $100. You know me, Snooks. You know from whence I came."

"Somewhere from that part of the world constantly afflicted with obscure volcanic disturbances, or horrifying tidal-waves. Anywhere but here. Hey Weatherton!"

"As you please *re* volcanic disturbances, etc. But let me tell you, Snooks, when volcanoes burst forth in my part of the world, they vomit out something of material consequence; *not merely gas.* How is it down your way? Let me inform you, pertinently with this occasion, I come from a land where one-plus-one makes one. I am constituted of two in one. Do you catch?"

"Marvel of marvels, Weatherton. You don't mean it; really you do not." Wide open eyes; and splendidly feigned astonishment.

"See that wrist. *Baptized twice on the same day at the same hour and minute.* Biceps in har-

monic proportion; and equally well-graced. Feel 'em."

"Ugh!"

"Lovely weather Snooks. Recent rains; no dust. Country awfully green. Millions of poppies, baby-blue-eyes, etc., etc.!"

"Charming weather! Divine! But what an oddity you are Weatherton; a minute ago you were discussing muscle, personality and volcanoes: and ——"

"And stock for sale. Do you know Snooks, I believe if I were to squeeze a bunch of my certificates into your coat pocket—there—just like that.—Oh, not at all; not at all.—Take them home, and study them over. You'll be immensely pleased. I'm sure you will. Come Southby, let's go into the Exchange Club; and try a bottle of wine. Quite dry. Really quite so. Morning Snooks!"

"Weatherton," called out Snooks, who stood bewilderingly fumbling the certificates our insular oddity had so deftly thrust upon him. "I don't want these. I don't believe in such trashy enterprises as you so very often propose. Neither do I hunt, fish or—or trade. Paugh! Do you can your products hermetically; or—or—I protest."

"Now don't perturb yourself about them. Take them home. Tomorrow I'll send R——, the Collection Man up to your office. You can fill out the certificates yourself. Will register them on the company's books whenever you desire me to. R—— will give you my receipt for the money. *Auf wieder sehen.*"

Aside to Southby, then.

"Wager the price of a new dinner-jacket those certificates are sold. Tomorrow, I place $500 on deposit (there were five shares in that bunch) with Givvus, Grantus & Guessus. Showed him my biceps, you know. Just display your arm, Southby: not only your hand; but your arm."

"I'll take tea, thank you. I dote on tea," came from Southby, tardily, by way of response. They had seated themselves at the Exchange Club.

"Southby you are not going to bull the stock-market on tea? Southby—" Here Weatherton gasped as if for breath. "You fail to comprehend the therapeutical-value fallacy of tea. *Theine,* and I may add, *caffeine* never have satisfactorily mastered pre-organization stock-markets."

"You are not going to force me out of——,"

"Hopelessness? Now that is just what I have undertaken to do. However, I'll grant you may have your tea; and further compromise by filling my claret-glass half with seltzer. Waiter, a siphon."

"Southby, are you a member of the Chamber of Commerce?"

"I am."

"Know many of its members?"

"About two hundred."

"Good! Mail each of these men a blank certificate. Inclose a rider to each, announcing a *pre-issue dividend* of one-dollar upon return of certificate. Especially require that said certificate shall have been presented in person, by bearer; and at your office. When they drop in, capture them. Pay them a dollar apiece, *whether*

they purchase stock or not. I'll contract to 'stand pat' for two hundred dollars. I can well afford to spend this amount. Every serious business-man advertises, you know."

"Weatherton, you're a genius. But I'm afraid I do not possess sufficient—a—business ability to do it. Smacks a little of bucket-shop methods, does it not?"

"Bucket-shop! No! Who ever heard of bucket-shop people giving away dollars! They haven't them to spare!"

Deep silence followed. Neither man spoke. There was nothing further to be said. Southby, still hopelessly, sipped his tea; Weatherton tippled; and smoked. Three, five minutes passed, sombrely bye. They were very full minutes, however. Weatherton fancied he saw several hundred thousand dollars leaping toward him out of a tractable void. Southby wondered, gravely, almost painfully, whether he possessed enough *sang-froid* now, requisite to a satisfactory consummation of desired ends. The verge of things possible was, with him, always exciting to the limit of human endurance. Just fancy a line of eager applicants stretching across the sidewalk fronting H—— S—— & Co.'s office: two or three blue-coated policemen standing around to preserve decent order? It was not reasonable to suppose the house objecting. Had he not been classified by the firm, as welcome 'hurrah.' Here was an opportunity to prove the man worthy of his steed.

"But why," inquired our novice, "did you suggest Chamber of Commerce people?"

"Men of means, friend! Could we anticipate, for a moment, getting anything out of paupers? Most of the town's money is down Chamber of Commerce way. Southby, I am discouraged. Fancy a compass-needle evading the pole! Why I gravitated their way."

Another lapse into mutual silence.

"Afraid I cannot do it!" finally came from Southby.

"Cannot—a—cannot! Did I catch you rightly, Southby? Or—or—Bitter claret this, very! Requires ice! Do you ever take lemons with your tea? Try one. Deliciously fragrant you know. Quite a tonic! Russian tea! Waiter, ice and lemons. Conscience, waiter, you are very slow!" A pause.

"Did you say afraid, sir?" continued Weatherton. "Afraid?"

"Yes, My wife——"

"Is a suffragette."

"Well? Was, once. Now a voter!"

"Southby, present her with five certificates, just as soon as you get home. Promise her a one-dollar pre-organization dividend, on each, if she will step down to your office and collect. After you get her there, commandeer her, as you would so much choice merchandise; and put her behind the counter. Man, I count—almost feel—seven-hundred thousand dollars clear profit in this enterprise! And the commissions are yours—yours!"

"Anyway, I object to your dollar-gift policy. Gifts are illegal; unless eleemosynary. You in-

tend to pay each recipient of a certificate one dollar, without value received."

"My dear sir, my certificates are works of art. I value them, at one dollar each, as such. I desire them returned. I merely buy them back. People will scarcely determine to return them, unless I do pay. You are still interested Southby? You haven't despaired yet?"

"It should sound well 'on the street.' I doubt if it would pass inside."

"Southby! Hopeless Southby!"

Exeunt.

SONNETS

The following verses were composed, and written, during the present year, while en route, both ways, between San Francisco, and Australia. Their briny sentiment is not the less appetizing, we trust, because of a golden motif we feel assured must ever be of extreme interest to an admirably acquisitive modern civilization.

SONNETS

I.

Superior ideals, pure thoughts of love,
Are best deep-draughted in poet's sonnet.
Thrills of true heart, now hot Cupid's won it,
With sentimental journeys up above,
All soft-robed in white down of Peace's dove
Weft in technique, with poesy the woof,
Should constitute the poet's realm—his roof—
His mansion in the skies: whence he may rove
Forth, into worlds of matter, grave, of fact:
Where most of romance reeketh in foulled sweet;
And sure release is governed by one's tact:
Where Heaven sitteth limned in bread and meat.
Yet, what more true, convincing; than the fact
That opulence, sound wealth, is Heaven's seat.

II.

We lisp in numbers our sweet songs of love:
We find in rhyme record of our fond dreams:
We yearn to soar, above these noisy streams,
To seek something better: for this we rove.
We wing on nothingness through thought above:
We cleave impenetrable mists of soul;
Ever attaining impossible goal;
For which we've generations—eons—strove.
We wander into realms of poesy,
Where meandering streams of idea flow:
Evading all horrific, plain, prosy;
Just where fine fancy may elect to go.
Yet, yet oh Muse, come tell of wealth cozy:
Fountain of youth, it but will make us grow.

III.

They told me thou wert beautiful, sweet, mine:
That all the soul of Nature dwelt in thee:
That thou wert lithsome, young, and fair and free:
That something infinite gleamed from thine eyne:
That transcendental grace enveloped thine
In roseate mists of fancy's fair thought,
(Far, far above ethereal worlds sought)
Where acts of purity unite, combine.
All exquisite conception there excelled!
All human fancy mastered, there, by love!
Where all that's commonplace, Appollo's felled
With mastering, conquering, sword above!
Yet opulence's there, in beauty held:
Great Providence's wonder, mercy, love.

IV.

Sweet musical notes, wafted hitherward,
Exploit now all heart's deeper sentiment:
Affording new sensations quite our bent.
So bound we over waves breezy, seaward;
Away from all dull city ways froward.
Oh, Muse, now grant us surcease of labour;
Release from importuning dull neighbor.
Our happiness, our love, too, now increase;
(Specious rest to commune with Heaven)
Thus find a place for wearied soul above.
We yearn now for this desired leaven.
It is a pact for which we've ever sought;
But can't forget that for which we've striven.
Let opulence, then, be just what it ought.

V.

We'll not despair of song, oh sweet soul mine.
We'll not languish in void for thought rhythmic
We've not but one couplet: we're plethoric.
Full store, full store of rhyme is ours; and thine.
Come Muse, about worthy brow now entwine
Us laurel long deserved; yet long forgot.
Sepulchre us in some much hallowed spot:
Where violets true blow; mayhap pea-vine.
Soften our quite recalcitrant crude selves.
With fragrance waft from fields elysian,
Guide us to realms in which idea most delves.
Enwrap us, too, in mists Arcadian.
Yet gather for us, busy little elves,
Opulence mightier than sword or pen.

VI.

Discovering in realms of sunny space:
Journeying too, through incandescent night;
(Couplets the sole comrades of fancy-flight)
Through nebulous new worlds, we creep a-pace.
Hope, hope, thou poet of a prosaic race,
Personified in justice to base earth!
(World most flat, wert not for thine august
birth!)
Guide us to Mercy's goal in this sweet race.
Yet beauty cannot blush without the pulse
That burning gold makes, coursing through its
veins.
Beauty cannot fair-feast upon food else:
And it will truly hold the guiding reins.
Providence! How virtuous wealth still tells!
A panacea for o'er-tiréd brains!

VII.

Tintinnabulating sounds burst on ear,
Industry transported through harmony.
The world has joined in concert—symphony.
We move, we move in some vacuous sphere.
Discovery! The poesy of fear!
Onward, on airy flight, we aviate
Through realms where no one, nowhere hath e'er
sate.
We stoy; and then drink Death as cup to cheer:
But righting, pass the fatal pall-clad tomb;
And kiss the sun: and call it love, sweet love.
(True love! Just such as comes from Nature's
womb!)
Then gather opulence: that it may prove
Our bridge of life, our main-stay our *a-plomb;*
Perhaps our ship to bear us up above.

VIII.

Cureall virtue, in a correct couplet,
Exceeds the prayer of professional man
Lisp in poesy sweet, then, if you can.
Call on the Muse to tonic breast upset.
Then let the heart take a firm rhythmic set.
Oh gray, cold sea, thou'st worried wearied pen:
Thou'st robbed it of fair sentiment: and then
Thou'st tossed idea, upon wandering wet,
To let it languish in unfathomed void,
Atomized spray dashed on unwelcome shore.
Pulsating there, it cries itself annoyed.
(To return unto its self nevermore?)
Ah, had we but remained on land; and toyed
With all-prevailing wealth; though meagre store.

IX.

We yearn for vistas of those fern-clad realms;
Where youth joyful, lusty, was wont to dwell:
Where blossomed grasses tall the meadows swell;
And perfumed flowers wild, our brain o'erwhelms.
For bye-gone ships of hope, faith-guided helms,
That steer into lands of glorious gain,
Through many a leafy mystic crook'd lane.
Such shades our fathers loved o'ertopped with elms.
But gold, gold, burning, all-conquering gold!
Thou'rt veritably commander of heart!
Our thoughts of odorous dells may grow old.
No longer may have flowers wholesome part.
We yearn for wealth in quantities untold.
Ultima Thule! This is fact; not art.

X.

Disappointment in life's near sanctified.
(Indeed, and veritably it must be.)
We're lost, at times, in gray melancholy.
Then, gone is all for which we've life-long tried.
All hope, like love (vain love) has flown; has died.
And yet the sunny advent of next morn
Hath generate new fortune; new wealth born.
Ah, Providence! Thy virtues long we've cried!
Great good abundance, hast thou an equal?
King opulence, hast ever been deposed?
Once more the warming hearth; and hearts cheerful!
Dormant celestial joy long hath dozed.
Avaunt horrid fancies morbid, fearful:
Corpus of poverty thus diagnosed.

XI.

The mellow morn doth miss the songful bird.
Here on a boundless wilderness of sea.
No cricket chirps; no restive honey-bee;
No dragon-fly, nor squirrel overheard.
No crow of cock, nor low of grazing herd.
Nor yet sweet flowers grace environment.
We are at sea! Lost, lost! Yea, lost the word!
Forever lost now to all prosaic cant.
The past material is naught but mist:
A blotch upon a soiléd memory,
Sweet hope of future we have, hungry, kist.
Let bosom heave response, then, cheerily.
Oh gold! Oh wealth! Thou'rt sacred! Thou art blest!
Panacea! Earth moving wearily.

XII.

'Mid brine-soaked archipelegos of thought,
Our craft of fancy bears us, buoyantly
Through translucent seas, mounted gallantly:
On, on to the goal long we've bravely sought.
And yet, and yet how dearly these dreams bought;
More beautiful, perhaps, because they're dear;
More coveted eccentric to career.
Oh just to gather what we really ought!
Oh just to harvest what we've fancied best!
Then wrap ourselves in morphic ever-sleep!
Thus gain desirous e'er-coveted rest;
Away from prosaic worlds of weep-and-weep,
To which poetic-soul hath long attest.
Yet opulence should limn our slumbers deep.

XIII.

The dull warm day hath scorned the mast'ring
sun:
The sea hath turned face from beauteous sky:
With shadow darkened, turned its face awry;
As though its duty to fair art were done.
Effects, theatrical, have now quite gone;
And sombre melancholy rules the scene.
But this sad daughter of our joy we wean;
And look for smiles of warmth; or coming morn.
Yet what is happiness without great weal!
Here in this world prosaic; this world severe!
Here vanishes all vanity, we feel.
To covet sense we banish all that's queer.
The thought of gold makes man's future real;
Then toward this consummation let us steer.

XIV.

We half discover self in sentiment;
Developing new realms of real love,
From which we soar to larger worlds above;
Eternally lift, out of false content,
Through deep regard for fine poetic bent.
(True sense of our universal beauty;
Proper regard for each human duty.)
Yet do not relinquish all He hath sent.
Art, art, thou cans't not obliterate self;
Obscuring, thus, a sound poetic pulse!
Art, art, thou e'erprovoking wicked elf;
Ever master of all things keenly false!
Stay! what beautifuller victor, o'er gulf,
Than purse of gold! Obviously what else!

XV.

Oh, faithless soul! Why not accept merit?
Why quail and tremble at the unjust sneer?
Must World yield up its all to powers queer;
Because precedents can scarcely bear it?
Must we lose the crown while others wear it;
And sacrifice fair truth to vulgar wit!
Ah, truth! To make common-place thing of it!
Providence! Art thou so low to fear it!
We strive for gain! Is't not obvious, plain!
Our vanity does, illy, obscure it.
Our lives are sanctified, nor doth bold stain
By science ministeréd abjure it.
We strive for gold! Then let us have our gain!
Restored of faith! The future shall show it.

XVI.

We have attained the multipeopled shore;
And softly bundled all our love and hopes.
We've left our corded fancy, fay-like ropes,
With other tackle of soul-ship of yore;
And stept into another realm. A store
Of imag'ry awaits tired fancy.
We'll win, though it be by necromancy.
Oh beauteous peace; antithesis, war!
We'll win through peace poetic, through wisdom.
We'll win through fancy's pen; couplet plenty.
In rhythm sympathetic let bliss come.
We once dreamt golden course; then, swift bent we.
We've mounted swells of mind; and soul-storm some.
Graciousness of love; patience rent we!

EPIC OF THE SOUTH WEST

PROEM

The following lines were inspired by heart-felt concern for the wholesomeness of a new Los Angeles, California, water supply.

Aware of the fact that extremely pure waters [Such as the lofty American sierras afford] were impracticable of confinement, lest they should [Too certainly, they will] deteriorate; and having been informed of the aqueduct-engineer's plans to construct reservoirs, we determined to enlighten an ever-gullible public in manner best pertinent with our humble means.

In the final couplets, we have not failed to devote some [Acceptable, we hope] attention to a proposed Hetch Hetchy scheme for supplying San Francisco.

THE AUTHOR.

EPIC OF THE SOUTH WEST

We sing soft strains of fairy lands;
  Of occidental Earth.
We sing sweet songs, ethereal bands
  Of Muses once gave birth
In far-away wild Cathay realm,
  This side Pacific wave;
Where no Odysseus held the helm,
  Aeneas wandered brave.
Where naught but hoary mountain height,
  Green-capped in forestry,
Disputed daylight with deep night;
  Grim Nature's chivalry.
Where boundless wilderness of sands,
  Dust-ravaged, wind oppressed,
Stretched forth their gaunt be-fingered hands,
  In sunburn gravely dressed,
Where cacti and coyote breathed
  Defiance to the God;
When, in sharp thorns or fur-skin sheathed,
  They kissed the rattle-pod.
Where monster saurian out-bleached
  Its rivalling reptile-horde:
Horrific caudal-fixture stretched
  Prone forth upon the sod.
Myriad noxious atomae,
  Too, vitiated all
Pertinent with true botany.
  Aye, Earth before the Fall!

Where thirsty thirst, presuming, durst
  Inveigle life away;
Entrancing the righteous and cursed,
  Return them clay to clay.
Where sweaty heat its thousand feet
  Creeping, o'er-crawl and pierce
Animal flesh, with singeing heat,
  Like fiery furnace fierce,
Where hillock and deep depression;

Arroyo, and ravine;
Dishevelling plane-possession,
Lend romance to the scene.
Where neither man nor deity
Care ever to sojourn:
To change from things much more pretty;
Forswear them but to yearn.
Where clouds, and winds, and starry skies
Are scarce of Paradise:
Rotting flesh's akin to flies;
And gangrened men are lice.
Here, here we steer, with tremblous fear,
Our craft of fancy-flight:
Here, here we linger: what place queer
More truly horrid, quite?

On pinnacle of porphyry,
Sprung sheer from out the sand,
Silhouetted against the sky,
Two human figures stand.
Two human figures clad in health;
Bronze-tinted with the sun.
Limber-muscled; with tread of stealth,
Like reptile man doth shun,
Tall, straight they, both; of proper weight:
Grim featured; hard as stone:
One aged quite twenty years and eight;
The other thirty-one.
Like in stature; and like in strength;
Like in their mental poise:
Like in their depth of soul, life-length,
Sonorousness of voice.
Americans two, these are; true
To ideal savagery.
Taught to do as wild Indians, too,
Devoid of imagery.
But rough and rugged, romantic
Soul, just beneath the burn,
Unbent through custom pedantic,
Can scarce escape this turn.

Americans two, these are; true
  To ideal savagery.
Taught to think as wild Indians, too,
  Devoid of imagery.
They stand and gaze, one quite amazed;
  The other silent, glum:
They stand and gaze, with face upraised,
  In stillness of the tomb.
They seem to peer into the queer
  Depths of an airy haze:
One trembling slightly, as with fear;
  The other firm of gaze.
They seem to peer into the queer
  Unfathomable mist,
Enshrouding all the desert near;
  Heat all a-quiver, 'twist.
Yea, at the edge of some mirage,
  Intangible fay-glen,
They think they see another age;
  Another race of men.
Myriad marvels consonant
  With grotesque-fevered mind;
And fancy-tangled brain hard-bent
  Such figured things to find.
For here, depicted in the air,
  Are forms in featured art;
Setting forth a romance most fair;
  An historical chart.
Strange stories told of things of old:
  Of path-finding grandees.
Conquistadores after gold;
  Or (emptiness) for praise.
And trips of ships with shredded strips
  Of storm-torn stained sails:
Of caballeros on whose lips
  Played Castille's langorous tales;
Yea, trips of ships with shredded strips
  Of wind-torn o'er-worked sails:
Gowned friars fresh from their choirs;
  Or disciplining flails.

Bold feats of arms; and freaks of charms;
  Of manliness and men.
Of glancing eyes: of maidens' sighs;
  Marvels of sword and pen.
For here depicted in the air,
  Are forms in featured art:
Setting forth a romance most fair;
  An historical chart.

What time they gazed, steadfast, amazed
  Upon the wondrous scene;
Warm, and o'er-pressed, with tense heat glazed,
  Mirage-miracled screen.
What time they stood, soberest mood,
  Contemplative, and still!
Now, then, imagine, if one could,
  The heart-felt human will,
That filled the then of these two men,
  Discovered of the now:
That filled these bronzéd persons, when
  They saw beneath a brow
Of umber-colored tumulus,
  Wandering hitherward.
What certainly seemed a monstrous
  Serpent, horrid, untoward.
Seemed to them hyperbolean,
  A giant metaphor,
Obscuring all else, puny, mean;
  Devouring all before.
And miles, and miles, sinuous miles,
  This object manifest
Upon the sun-burnt desert tiles,
  Did permanently rest.
Sparkling bright in the brilliant light,
  A gurgling liquid stream,
Dazzling e'en the accustomed sight,
  Startling all peace of dream,
Ravishing river, a-shimmer,
  Pellucid drops welcome,

In perspective, dimmer, dimmer,
  From distance seemed to come.
Wonder, wonder! God of Thunder!
  It was the work of Man.
Else super-natural blunder;
  Some freak of fairy-glen.

"Great Tutochanullah, father,
  Worthy American:
Tissaak, noblest Indian mother,
  Tell us of why and when
This freak, this streak of liquid leak,
  This artifice of man
Is create? Oh, Great Father speak:
  Enlighten if you can.

"Tell us if thy mighty spirit
  Hath sanctioned all this art;
This work, this craft? Dost know of it?
  Does it please thy great heart?

"Tell us why, our Mother Nature
  Distort, must yield to plan,
Where every lovable feature
  Rent, must be now by man?"

Thus spake he, the elder bronzed son
  With hair just turning gray;
And bent he toward the other one
  Gazing far, far away.
Then a reply, with long-drawn sigh,
  The younger native vouched;
And pointing toward the Northern sky,
  Lustrous, divinely touched,
Spake this: "Oh hear, my brother brave,
  White man's work is for naught.
Know yonder mountains' rocky cave,
  Where this strange water's caught
Is where lie the great Gods entrapped.
  Yosemite close by.

Walled in by country rough, frost-capped;
  O'er-topped with meager sky.
Is where lie the great Gods entrapped;
  Thinkst thou they're not aware
Of how these men have map out-mapped
  All Earth, except the air.
And even it, the atmosphere,
  Must yield to White Man's way,
Exploited by airships most queer,
  That dip, and "stoy" and "stay."

"Aye, brave the Gods; and mighty too";
  Responded he of age:
"But shrewd is man; ah, shrewd most true;
  Yet hogs they, on rampage,
Runting, rooting, hunting, shooting;
  The world must fall before;
Wise they, as owls, always hooting,
  Braggards they, ever-more.
Beat they will, these shrewd swine in swill;
  Attainment is the end.
Push until they have gained their will:
  E'en too, the Gods must bend."

"Not so, not so, the scheme below
  Must ignominiously
Go where all certain failures go:
  Willy, nilly: illy.
Know ye brother yon widening bow;
  Nestling amid the hills.
It is a lakelet which the snow
  A-melt, plenteously fills.
See, the waters clear as crystal
  Stagnate in the wide pool.
Browned, deep-hued, here make they tryst, till
  Consumed by human fool.
Tell me can new snow-water pure;
  (Or rain-storm deftly caught;)
Impounded, many days endure
  Fresh as when first 'twas sought?

Know ye famed Mirror Lake, so-called?
  (White Man thus nameth it)
Purest of water once; but galled;
  Fever so shameth it.
Determine, then, the victory,
  Shrewd Man yearns now to cry,
Shouting his valedictory
  To artificial sky.

Vain, vain the brain of civic-stain,
  Against wisest thunder.
Behold it is uniquely plain,
  This aqueduct's blunder?
Then look, ye, East and West and South
  To purify the sight.
Gaze not upon this work forsooth;
  This artifice of night.
It ill-becomes the giant tomes
  Of printed science neat,
To teach diseases for clean homes
  Where civilized men meet."

* * * * * *

A gust of wind, and swirl of sand;
  Obscuring clouds of dust;
Obliterating all where stand
  Those wise men, bronzed to rust;
A whirl, a puff, and then out-snuff
  Our figures quaint of dream:
The Gods had spoken quite enough;
  The rest shall speak the stream.

* * * * * *

But, 'midst the mists, there still exists
  A wholesome sentiment.
The world shall love, preserve in lists
  With all toward honor bent
Logical use, and not abuse
  Of what our God has given.
Not wanton waste, by every ruse,

Of that for which we've striven.
In lines catchy, write Hetch Hetchy
With all we would cherish.
Contemned for e'er let the wretch be,
Desirous they perish.

Refrain, refrain thou fertile brain
Ambitious to impound
Tuolumne, swirling toward the plain
With troubled angry sound.
Desist, desist. Cease now thy jest,
Obviously thy fun:
Let Uncle Sam enjoy the rest;
And deem thy work well done.
Take the swirling waters plenty;
Pipe each pellucid drop.
But don't impound what, pure, sent He;
A crystal sky-born crop.

Oh wondrous feat! Thou waters sweet
Logical it, though odd.
O'er-bubbling, thou in rhythmic feet
Areas wide of sod.
Gathering of salts; shedding faults:
Conserving all its worth.
Good as when from High Heaven's vaults;
More consonant with Earth.
Branding on itself Spring Valley:
Proud to go in cool flow:
Gathering, with gushing rally,
Just what it, too, ought to.
This the water, Nature's daughter
Purity, must envy.
Truly never Nature sought a
Conservation like Thee.

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